

ROSEWELL



1665

STOCKTON



YOUNGE



1667







GXXV

44609/B

65.C.31

300 F. 2

[R. F. W. L. (Thom)]

The causes and cure of the
pestilence ...

London. 1665]

Payrol
14/7/11

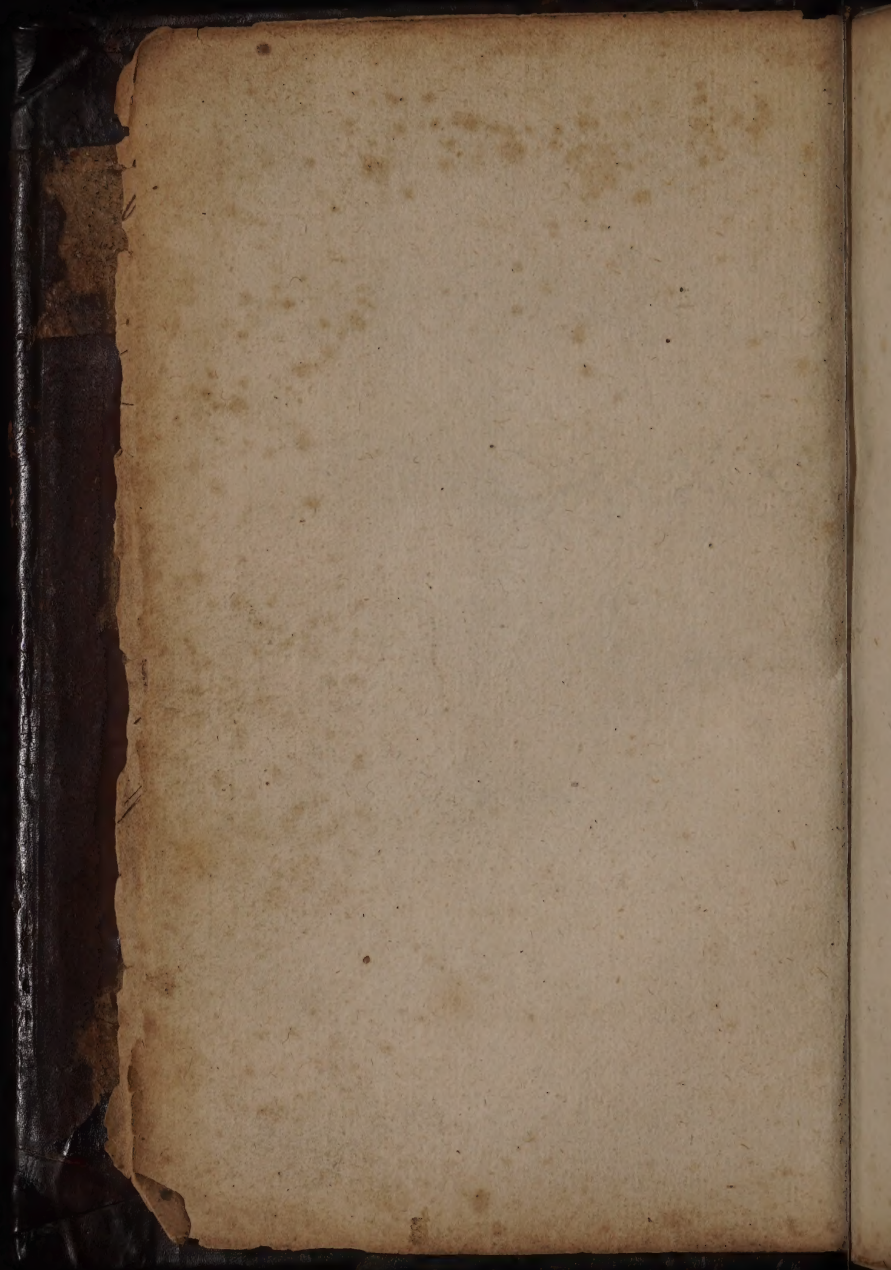
The Causes & Cure
of the pestilence, or a brief Collection
of those prooking sins. The Lord in the
holy scriptures for which the Lord
hath usually sent the sore —

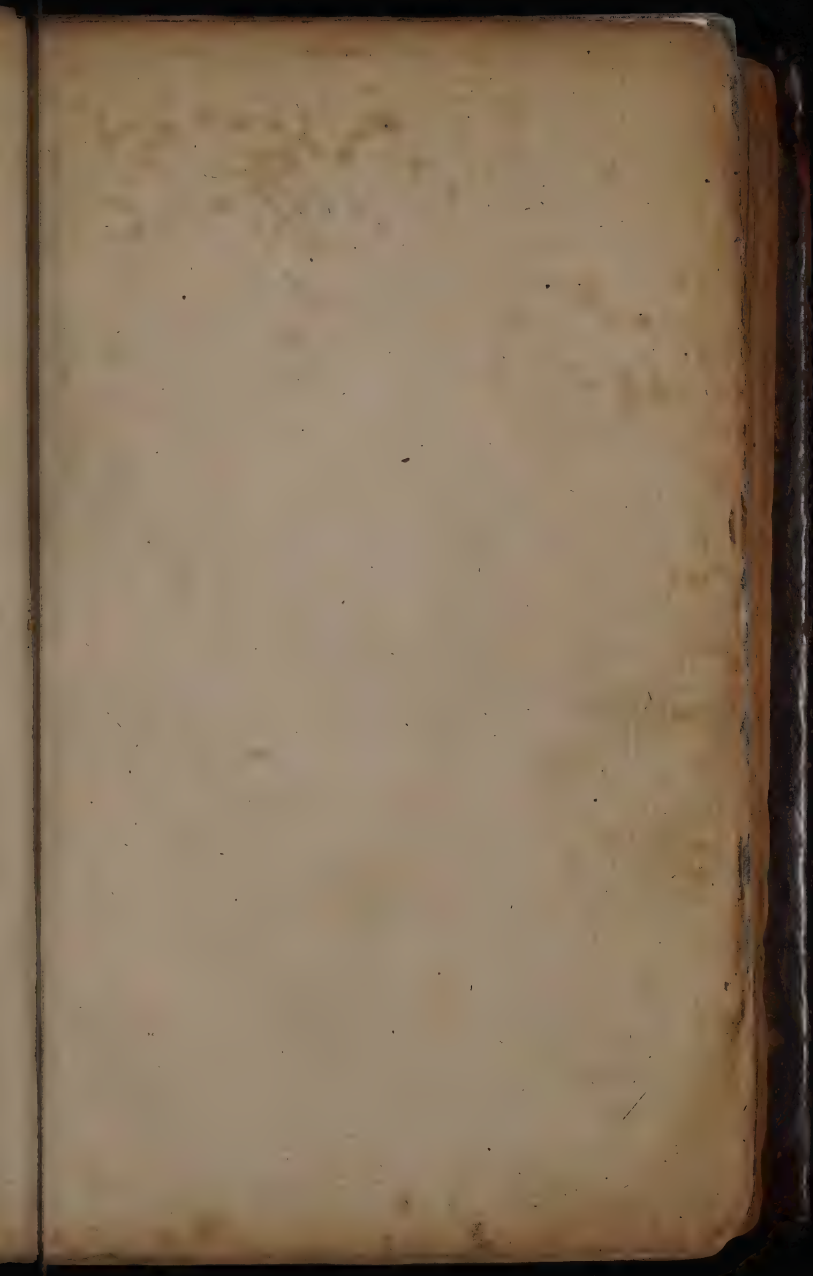
Destroying pestilence or plague
among a people

Together

With some spiritual spirituat
Receipts and preservatives against
the further increase of the
pestilential Diseases. &c.







Schmaiter
ought this Book

Loh

2500^s

5/6

Three

461

John mailer
ought this Book
1765

John John mail

John mailer



THE *B.*
CAUSES & CURE
OF THE
PESTILENCE:
OR,

A Brief Collection of those provoking Sins,
Recorded in the Holy Scriptures, for which the
Lord hath usually sent the sore destroying
Pestilence or Plague among a People.

TOGETHER

With some special Spiritual Receipts and
Preservativies against the further encrease of this
Pestilential Disease.

AND

May serve as a seasonable Call from the Lord, to in-
vite all sorts of People to a speedy Return unto
the Lord; and a forsaking of those sins which
otherwise will cause the Wrath of the Lord to
break out among us, so that there will be no
remedy.

Published for the common benefit of all; by him
who really tenders the good of all, and is an un-
fained lover of Peace and Truth, as it is in
Christ Jesus, T. R.

Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand,
Mat. 4. 17.

Repent, and turn your selves from all your transgressions,
so iniquity shall not be your ruine, Ezek. 18. 30.

Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish, Luk. 13. 3.

London, Printed in the Year, MDCLXV.

20087 (1)



rem
mili
bod
lenc
Lo
me
mo
pia
the
of
kne
har
Da
sp
M



TO THE
Christian Reader.



Know many necessary, wholsom, external directions have lately been prescribed, and exposed to publique view, not only for the cure of the Plague, but for the preventing of the said Infection; and most people are forward enough to make use of outward remedies and means to preserve themselves and families; in a wholsom and healthful constitution of body, or if sick and diseased, whether by the Pestilence, or by any other stroak or visitation of the Lord, to recover themselves again into their former condition of health; And how many also remove their habitations, and flye away into remote places, thinking thereby to shelter themselves from the eyes of the Almighty, and so escape the stroak of Divine Justice? But I would let such persons know, who are running away from God, that his hand can find them out, and overtake them. As David, Psa. 139. 7. *Whether shall I go from thy spirit? Or whether shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I take*
A 2

To the Reader.

the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the Sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me; If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me, even the night shall be light about me; Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee, but the night shineth as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to thee. And what saies Job, Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering, Job 26. 6. And again, His eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings. There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves, for he will not lay upon man more then right, Job 34. 21, 22, 23. And know for a certain, as Moses spake unto the Israelites, That if you sin against the Lord, be sure your sin will find you out, Numb. 32. 23. And for others that would seek preservation and health in the use of lawful means, the same may be lawfully and warrantably done, so the Lord be primarily and principally sought unto, otherwise thou mayst fall under the like reprehension and blame, as Asa did, who though his disease was exceeding great, yet, in his disease he sought not to the Lord, but to the Physicians, 2 Chron. 16. 12. All secondary means will be little available to thy health, if the Lord bless them not. And as every Creature of God is sanctified by the Word of God and Prayer, as in 1 Tim. 4. 4, 5. So is it the Lords great Prerogative Royal, to kill and to make alive, to bring down to the Grave, and to bring up again, 1 Sam. 2. 6. Which the Lord himself hath ratified out of his own mouth, Deut. 32. 29. But alas, how few are there who are truly sensible of the hand of God, though it be list up, and hath taken hold of judgment?

It

To the Reader.

It is true, that most men and Women do generally fear and dread the Pestilence, because it is a noysom and most uncomfortable destroying disease, excluding the society of the choyselt friends, and of the nearest and dearest Relations; But do they mind or consider the pestilential nature of those sins, that usually bring down this severe stroak and visitation from the Lord upon a nation? How few among us are sensible of our soul-sicknesses? and if not sensible, how then can any spiritual remedies, and preservatives be sought out, and sanctifiedly applied? But know, that the Diseases of the soul are far more dangerous and deadly then those of the body. No bodily Disease can hinder thy glorious resurrection, but if thou dye in a spiritual disease, in sin, unlamented and unrepented of, it cuts off all hope of future glory, and precipitates unto the second death. It was therefore strongly moving upon my heart, (with respect chiefly to the glory of God, and the publique emolument and good of all, and as a most unworthy instrument in the hand of God) to be contributing my Mite towards the recovery of a poor smacking, gasping, languishing, and dying Kingdom; to bestow that little precious time, which the Lord in mercy should vouchsafe unto me, as seperated from all secular employments, in searching into the sacred Scriptures, to find out, and gather together those hainous and hideous sins, which stand upon record, as such which are the procuring causes of Gods sending down this sore visitation of the Pestilence among us, which here in all humility, as conscious of mine own soul-sicknesses and distempers, I present unto thy view, taking that course herein,

To the Reader.

as wise Physicians, or Chirurgions do, in reference to the health of their Patients (though I profess my self to be very unskilful and unexpert in so serious and waighty a matter) who will not prescribe any Physicall receipts, curations, or remedies, till they search out, and rightly understand the nature, grounds, and causes of their evil malignant and malevolent distempers. And herein I have endeavoured to search the wound to the quick, not superficially or parcially, but thoroughly, as that which is most conducible to a sound and perfect healing; that as well Professors as prophane persons might be brought to a sight of their own evils; which as fewel to the fire, have kindled the wrath of God against us; It was the Lords complaint against the Prophets and Priests in the Prophet Jeremies time, *That they had healed the hurt of the Daughter of his people slightly, saying, peace, peace, when there was no peace*, Jer. 6. 14. They healed slightly, in the lightest manner, by telling a tale, as it were, or some light speech, as if it were but a jest, or a scare-crow, as if the sins and the punishments that were threatned, were of little or no concernment. Now the nature of the disease being thoroughly found out and discovered, and considering also how forward most are to make use of outward remedies, for bodily preservation; It was much upon my heart also, to prepare some special spiritual and heavenly receipts, and sovereign antidotes, in order, both to bodily and soul preservation, from this of the destroying Pestilence, in a special manner; For God layeth diseases on the body, to restrain or to punish the diseases and sicknesses of the soul, or to force us

to

To the Reader.

to seek spiritual remedies for the same. So that now, though thy disease may be very dangerous and desperate, yet being diligent and conscientious in the use of the means, thou needest not despair of help, or be crying out with the Prophet *Jeremy*, *Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no Physitian there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?* Jer. 8. 22. I cannot say as some bold Physitions, or Mountebanks rather, that I have onely one Salve for every sore, or one sovereign Universal Pill for all manner of diseases; yet I have not prescribed thee many receipts, for to tire thee, or that thou shouldest say; The remedy is worse then the disease: but seven only, in order to the curing of fifteen very pernicious and mortal distempers; In the opening of which, I confess I have enlarged my self, more then I thought at first to have done, but I hope thou wilt not think it tedious or to much, seeing it is but to discover unto thee, the most excellent worth and vertue that in each of those special and spiritual receipts, is comprised and contained. And though I might have used more brevity, by touching lightly upon Scriptures, and have referred thee to the marginal notes for thy perusing of them, yet I thought it would not be so beneficial, as the rehearſal of the Scriptures themselves; which as it will go on more smooth and pleasurable in reading, so will it suite best with the weakest knowledge and understanding, for whose sakes in a special manner this Treatise was intended; Therefore I hope you will not look for excellency of speech or of wisdom, in declaring unto you the Testimony of God, that may better be expected

To the Reader.

From men trained up in the Universities and Schools of Learning. But I desire in much plainness of speech, by the manifestation of the truth, and in demonstration of the spirit and power of God to commend my self to every mans conscience in the sight of God, 1 Cor. 2. 4. & 2 Cor. 4. 2. And O that the Lord would make it of some special use to reduce this poor dying Nation to a sight of their highly provoking evils, and a speedy return unto the Lord by unfeigned repentance, that he may say to the destroying Angel, *It is enough, stay now thine hand,* 1 Chron. 21. 15. This is the Prayer of him who is really,

*Thine in all Christi-
an services,*

Thomas Rosewell.

THE

THE CONTENTS.

1. **O**pression, *the first highly provoking Pestilential sin,* Fol. 1 8
2. Persecution, *the second highly provoking Pestilential sin,* 8
3. Murder and Bloodshed *the third, &c.* 13
4. Idolatry, *the fourth highly, &c.* 17
5. Covetousness, *the fifth highly, &c.* 24
6. Cursing and Swearing *the sixth highly, &c.* 32
7. Adultery and Fornication, *the seventh highly, &c.* 34
8. Infidelity, Murmuring, and Distrust, *the eighth highly, &c.* 37
9. Discontent and Disdainfulness of Gods Mercies, *the ninth highly, &c.* 41
10. Pride and Ambition and Carnal Confidence, *the tenth highly, &c.* 44
11. Apostacy, Backsliding, and Revolting from God, *the eleventh highly, &c.* 47
12. Rebellion and obstinate disobedience against God and his Commandements, *the twelfth highly, &c.* 50
13. Insurrection and rising up against the Lords lawful Governours, and Government, *the thirteenth highly, &c.* 54
14. Prophanation of Gods holy things, and a presumptuous speculation into Gods secrets, *the fourteenth highly, &c.* 57
15. Adding to, or administring from the Word of God, *the fifteenth highly, &c.* 61

Spe-

The Contents.

Special Spiritual Remedies, Antidotes, and Preservatives against the Pestilence.

1. *A diligent Scrutiny and Examination of Heart, the first spiritual Receipt,* 63
2. *Sound and Sincere Repentance, the second spiritual Receipt, 76. Wherein is comprized*
1. *Sorrow and Mourning for sins Personal and National, the first part or evidence of sound and sincere Repentance.* ib.
1. *Mourning for Personal Sins,* ib.
- {

The Frailties and Pollutions of nature; 95
The sinful Acts and Habits of thy unregenerate life, ib.
The slips and relapses of thy most regenerate life, 96
- Special Helps and Means to get the heart to be melted into a mournful frame for sin,* 83
2. *Mourning for National sins,* 86
2. *Hatred and Abhorrency of all sin, with a humble confession thereof, the second part or evidence of sound and sincere repentance,* 90
1. *Hatred and Abhorrency of all and every sin,* ib.
- Special Helps and Means to work a hatred and detestation in the will against sin;* 92
- {

1. What sin is in it self, ib.
2. How God is provoked with it, 94
3. How thou art hurt & prejudiced by it, ib.
2. *Humble confession of sin,* 96
1. *To God offended,* 97
2. *To thy Brother, offended, together with the necessity of the said duty,* 97
3. *A*

The Contents.

3. A willing forsaking and renunciation of all sin,	
the third part or evidence of sound and sincere re-	
pentance, 98. Under which is handled,	
What repentance is, viz.	ib.
A turning of the whole heart from Satan and sin,	100
unto God,	
According to which definition, Repentance hath two	101
parts,	
1. An aversion or turning away from Satan and	ib.
Sin,	
2. A Conversion or turning unto God.	ib.
4. A returning unto the Lord with all the Heart, the	
fourth branch or evidence of sound and sincere re-	ib.
pentance,	
Applied to the sins of England,	107
And to the sins of Protestors.	109
3. Faith in the blood of Christ, the third spiritual	
Receipt,	118
Under which head is comprized,	
{ in the Power and All-sufficiency of God, ib.	
Faith { in the Faithfulness of God, ib.	
{ in the Promises of God, ib.	
1. Faith in the blood of Christ, of excellent vertue and	
efficacy to expell	
1. All the fiery assaults of Satan,	ib.
2. The venome and malignity of sin,	122
Applied also to the life of Salvation,	124
Sanctification, and	ib.
Preservation,	ib.
2. Faith in the Power and All-sufficiency of God,	125
1. In times of great Difficulties and Streights,	127
2. In times of Sore Sicknes,	136
3. In	

The Contents.

3. In times of Great Sining,	138
4. In times of Worshipping and Serving of God,	140
5. In times of Great Suffering for God,	142
3. Faith in the Faithfulness of God,	147
Upon the account,	
1. Of the unchangeableness of Gods love,	ib.
2. Of our vocation to, and confirmation in the grace of God,	149
3. Of our temptations and afflictions with sin and Satan,	151
4. Of our publique testimony for the Lord,	152
5. Of our suffering for Christ, and contentation under the Cross,	152
4. Faith in the Promises of God,	154
Whether of a	ib.
<div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle; font-size: 2em;">{</div> <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle; text-align: center;"> Temporal, Spiritual, or Eternal, </div> <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle; font-size: 2em;">}</div> concernment.	
Promises of salvation firm and certain in Christ,	ib.
general and indefinite, and made to all that beleive,	155
Applicable and comfortable, as to relapses and sinning again after repentance,	157
in pangs of the New-birth,	157
in all kind and varieties of temptations, spiritual desertions, slanderous speeches, desperate distresses, greatest difficulties,	ib.
Promises of temporal things, not absolute but conditional,	159
Many temporal Promises laid down and applyed,	ib.
The Promises are of excellent use in all estates and conditions,	163
4. Faithful	

The Contents.

4. Faithful and fervent prayer, the fourth spiritual Receipt,	165
The derivation and definition of it,	165, 166
Prayer to be made to God onely in the name of Christ,	167
Through the Spirit,	171
In Faith, a necessary ingredient,	
From the heart with fervency of spirit,	172
With understanding,	173
With a feeling of our wants,	174
With fear and reverence,	175
With a spirit of love and forgiveness,	ib.
With perseverance,	176
The singuler worth, excellency, and efficacy of Prayer,	ibid.
Applied to the present Visitation of the Pestilence,	180
And to the state of England, as to her prayers and tears,	182
Exhorting such as have received the spirits anointing to be much in the exercise of this heavenly skill,	184
5. To be dwelling in the secret place of the most high, or to make the Lord our habitation, the fift spiritual receipt,	186
What we are to understand by the secret place of the most high,	187
What by making God our habitation,	190
And so it concludes.	
1. To have our constant abode and residence with God,	193
2. To make God our refuge and strength,	196
3. To make God the place of our secrecie, or of our Closet and close retirement,	202
4. To	

The Contents.

4. To make God the place of our delectation or delight,
5. To make God the place of our Negotiation or commerce.
6. Get a merciful, tender, pitiful, and compassionate heart, the sixth spiritual receipt, 232
Several motives thereunto, 233
7. An evangelical, universal obedience to the Gospel of Christ, the seventh spiritual receipt, 241

ERRATA

ERRATA.

Gentle Reader,

THe Authors absence from the Press, hath occasioned some Mistakes in the Printing; Thou art desired to correct with thy Pen these faults among others; Which being done, he hath but this request more to make unto thee, that when thou enterest upon the reading of this Treatise, thou wilt not lay it quite aside, till thou hast read it thoroughly; And then thou wilt find it necessary to be meditated upon when the Pestilence ceaseth, so long as the Plague of sin remaineth.

PAge 1. Line 6. Read Oppression, l. 21. r. in Egypt, p. 13. l. 3. r. provoking a sin, p. 19. l. 22. r. a Molten Calf, p. 27. l. 33. r. is it not of the Lord, p. 32. l. 8. r. Professors of our times, p. 33. l. 18. r. Prophets, p. 36. l. 5. r. up and down, p. 40. l. 23. r. regenerate persons, p. 41. l. 2. r. he relied on him, p. 44. l. 13. r. in numbring the people, p. 46. l. 16. r. my people, p. 52. l. 27. r. send my foure, p. 59. l. 25. dele said, p. 64. l. 7. r. all these things, p. 67. l. 24. r. raising up, p. 70. l. 9. r. to fann, p. 71. l. 23. r. owner, p. 73. l. 14. r. on this so, p. 77. l. 8. r. so great a good, p. 79. l. 28. r. shew, p. 80. l. 33. r. a sin it is, p. 89. l. 32. r. or the miseries of Sion, p. 93. l. 3. r. nothing comes near it, p. 104. l. 5. r. Ephraim, p. 106. l. 10. r. within her; p. 111. l. 12. r. power, p. 112. l. 1. r. John 9: verse. l. 11. r. that they, p. 114. l. 29. r. there will be, p. 124. l. 20. r. let thy, l. 33. r. more fruitfully, p. 140. l. 13. r. wickedness, p. 148. l. 19. r. stars, p. 162. l. 32. r. outward state, p. 171. l. 27. r. you cannot pray, p. 185. l. 3. r. righteousnesses, p. 199. l. 4. r. Molten Images, p. 208. l. 3. r. get all those, p. 210. l. 34. r. he bewrays, p. 230. l. 26. r. that they may.

THE

C

T

Ullur
Cien
P
die, u
dren o
ten with
hau n
gour,
dage,
of ser
they m
son of v
and cry
1. 11,
3. 7.
of my p

THE CAUSES & CURE OF THE Pestilence.

THe first Sin which I shall insist upon, so highly provoking unto the Lord, to send the destroying Pestilence among a people, is the sin of *Oppression*: When the Supreme Powers and Authorities of a Nation, do exercise a Usurpation or Oppression over the Bodies and Consciences of the people of God. This was the sin of *Pharaoh*, who tyrannized, not onely over the Bodies, but over the Consciences also, of the Children of *Israel*; He sets Task-masters over them, to afflict them with their burdens; And the *Egyptians* made the Children of *Israel* to serve with rigour, and made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in Morter and in Brick, and in all manner of service in the field; all their service wherein they made them serve, was with rigour. By reason of which bondage, the Children of *Israel* sighed and cryed, and their cry came up unto God, *Exod.* 1. 11, 13, 14. comp. with *Chap.* 2. 23. So *Chap.* 3. 7. The Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in *Egypt*, and have heard their

B

cry,

cry, by reason of their Task-masters, for I knowt their sorrows; And in the 9th. Verse. Behold the cry of the Children of Israel, is come up unto me; and I have also seen the Oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them. This was an oppression that Pharoah and his cruel Task-masters did exercise over their bodies.

The oppression that he exercised over their souls and consciences, did evidently appear in this. The Lord he called, and commisionated Moses to go unto Pharoah, and he with the Elders of Israel, were to say unto him; The Lord God of the Hebrews hath met with us, and now let us go (we beseech thee) three days journey into the Wilderness, that we may sacrifice unto the Lord our God, Exod. 3. 18. This they often prest upon him: And the reason wherefore they so much urged it is very observable, in the 3d. Vers. of the 5th. Chap. Let us go we pray thee three days journey into the Desert, and sacrifice unto the Lord our God, lest he fall upon us with Pestilence, or with the Sword; That is, Lest he slay us and destroy us with Pestilence, and with the Sword, as in Judges 8. 21. Pharoah he hardens his heart, and is disobedient unto the word of the Lord. And Pharoah said, who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice, to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go. They be idle (saith he) therefore they cry, saying; Let us go and sacrifice unto our God, Exod. 5. 2. 8, 17. But the Judgments of God pursuing him at the very heels, and the greivous swarm of Flies coming into his house, and into his servants houses, and into all the Land of Egypt; so that the Land

was

the PESTILENCE.

was corrupted by reason of the swarm of Flies: then he calls for Moses and Aaron, that they might go and Sacrifice to God; but where? in the Land, that is, in his own Land, the Land of Egypt. But what said Moses? *It is not meet so to do, for we shall sacrifice the abominations of the Egyptians to the Lord our God; Lo, shall we Sacrifice the abominations of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone us? We will go three days' journey into the Wilderness, and Sacrifice unto the Lord our God, as he shall command us.* It is not meet, or it is not right so to do, as being not so appointed of God, who called into the Wilderness to Sacrifice, *Exod. 3. 18. Shall we Sacrifice the abominations of the Egyptians? That is, The Beasts which the Egyptians do worship, and do abhor to kill, or to see killed for Sacrifice.* And the Sentence twice repeated, may imply two senses.

1. Shall we Sacrifice to our God, such things as the Egyptians Sacrifice, that would be an abomination to the Lord?

Or, 2. Shall we Sacrifice such things as God requireth, that would be an abomination to the Egyptians.

The Scripture often calling the Gods and Services of the Heathens, Abominations; As *Dent. 7. 25. and 12. 30, 31. 2 King. 23. 13. Ezra 9. 1. Isa. 44. 19.* Now the principal Sacrifices of the Hebrews were Oxen and Sheep, *Gen. 15. 9.* And all Shepherds, or Sheep-keepers were an abomination to the Egyptians. *Gen. 46. 34.* For the Egyptians abstained from Sheep, and Sacrificed Goats. By all which it is very evident, that

Pharoah denying the Israelites to Worship, as God had appointed them, did oppress them, not only in their bodies, but in their Consciences likewise; which drew down the dreadful Judgments of God upon him and his Land; among which; this of the destroying Pestilence. For proof whereof, see *Exod. 3. 19, 20. I am sure (saith the Lord) that the King of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand. And what follows? I will stretch out my hand and smite Egypt with all my wonders, &c. So Exod. 9. 13, 14, 15. Thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may serve me; for I will at this time send all my plagues upon thy heart, &c. and especially in the 15. Vers. For now will I stretch out my hand, that I may smite thee and thy people with Pestilence, and thou shalt be cut off from the Earth. And in the 12. Chap. and 29. Vers. See what a dreadful slaughter the Lord made accordingly in the Land of Egypt. And it came to pass, that at Mid-night the Lord smote all the first-born in the Land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharoah that sat on his Throne, unto the first-born of the Captive that was in the Dungeon, and all the first-born of Cattel; and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a House where there was not one dead. See further the severity of God in punishing this sin of Oppression, Jer. 34. 17. Therefore, thus saith the Lord, ye have not hearkened unto me in proclaiming liberty every one to his brother, and every man to his neighbour; Behold, I proclaim a liberty for you, saith the Lord, to the Sword, to the Pestilence, and to the Famine, and I will make*

you

you to be removed into all the Kingdoms of the earth. So highly displeasing it is unto the Lord, for a people to be oppressed, either in their civil or spiritual liberties and enjoyments, according to that in *Psa. 12. 5.* For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise (saith the Lord) I will set him at safety from him that puffeth at him. And further, in *Isa. 49. 25, 26.* A dreadful place to all cruel Oppressors of Gods people; saith the Lord there, I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy Children; And I will feed them that oppress thee, with their own flesh, and they shall be drunken with their own blood, as with sweet wine; And *Amos 2. 6.* Thus saith the Lord, for three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; Why? Because they sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes. So *Isa. 52. 4, 5, 6.* Thus (saith the Lord) my people went down aforetime into Egypt to sojourn there, and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause; Now therefore what have I here, (saith the Lord) that my people is taken away for nought? they that rule over them, make them to bow, (saith the Lord) and my name continually every day is blasphemed. Therefore my people shall know my name, therefore they shall know in that day, that I am he that doth speak, behold it is I. By which it is very evident that the Lord does not onely intimate unto us, how sorely he plagued the Egyptians, because they had grievously afflicted and oppressed his people, which voluntarily, and of their own accord went down into Egypt, but also that he will much more grievously plague the

Affyrians that carried them away out of their own Land, the Land of *Canaan*, which he had given them for an Inheritance, and there dealt so cruelly and unmercifully with them.

So sorely displeasing is it unto the Lord, when those that rule over his people, shall make them to howl; that is, to cry bitterly, to mourn and lament sorely, as it is rendred, *Jer.* 4. 8. and *Ezek.* 21. 12. To this agrees that in the 50th. Chap. of *Jeremiah*, and the 33, and 34. Verses. Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, The Children of *Israel*, and the Children of *Judah* were oppressed together, and all that took them Captives held them fast, they refused to let them go. Their Redeemer is strong, the Lord of Hosts is his name, he shall thoroughly plead their cause, that he may give rest unto the Land, and disquiet the Inhabitants of *Babylon*. What we may understand by the Lords pleading of the cause of his people here, and disquieting the inhabitants of *Babylon* that oppressed them, that of *Jerem.* 51. 35, 36. doth evidently declare. The violence done to me and to my flesh, be upon *Babylon* shall the Inhabitants of *Sion* say, and my blood upon the Inhabitants of *Chaldea*, shall *Jerusalem* say. Therefore thus saith the Lord, behold I will plead thy cause, and take vengeance for thee, and I will dry up her Sea, and make her Springs dry. When the Lord shall plead the cause of *Sion*, then will he take vengeance for her, that is, he will avenge himself of his and her cruel oppressing enemies; According to that which the Lord of Hosts, the mighty one of *Israel* speaks in *Isa.* 1. 24. Ah, I will ease me of mine Adversaries, and avenge me of mine Enemies.

This

This is the time when he will make his Arrows drunk with blood, and his Sword to devour flesh. And then what follows? *Rejoyce O ye Nations, with his people: for he will avenge the blood of his Servants, and will render vengeance unto his Adversaries, and will be merciful unto his Land, and to his people.*; As it is in *Deut. 32. 42, 43.* This is that time which is called by the Prophet *Isaiah*, *The day of the Lords vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversies of Sion, Isa. 34. 8.* called by *Jeremiah*, *the vengeance of the Lord our God, the vengeance of his Temple, Jer. 50. 28.* And take notice then how severe the Lord will be. He tells us, that his Sword shall be bathed in Heaven, and it shall come down upon *Idumea*, and upon the people of his curse to Judgement. By *Idumea*, we are to understand *Edom*, or the *Edomites*, who were the nighest Kindred of the *Israelites*, but notwithstanding they were their greatest enemies and oppressors; And therefore said the Lord, by the Prophet *Obadiah*, *Vers. 10. For thy violence (meaning the Edomites) against thy Brother Jacob, shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever.* And these are a Type and Figure of all the enemies of the Church of God, who indeed do boast and brag that they are descended and born of the Church, crawing up the Temple of the Lord, The Temple of the Lord, setting up a Worship of their own devising, and are in the practise of Sacraments and Ordinances, as the true Church and Spouse of Christ, yet, indeed, and in truth, do hate, persecute, and oppress the true spiritual and sincere worship-

pers of Jesus. Whereby it is very evident, what dreadful plagues and punishments the sin of oppression doth bring upon a Land and Nation.

2. The second Pestilential sin, is the sin of *Persecution*, and *hatred against God and his people*: As God hath his Arrows of his deliverance for the preservation of his people against their enemies, 2 King. 13. 17. So he hath the Arrows of his Indignation and wrath, which *Job* being under a spirit of desertion and temptation apprehended were within him, the poison whereof he said did drink up his spirit, *Job* 6. 4. So *David* in the like condition, *That the arrows of the Lord did stick fast in him, and his hand pressed him sore*, *Psal.* 38. 2. And the Prophet *Jeremy* in his *Lamentations*; *He hath bent his bow* (saith he) *and set me as a mark for the Arrow. He hath caused the arrows of his quiver to enter into my reins*, *Lam.* 3. 12, 13. I say whatever might be the apprehensions of these holy and righteous men, yet surely the Lord has his arrows of his sore displeasure and wrath, which as the instruments of death, he hath prepared and ordained against the *Persecutors*, *Psal.* 7. 13. And this of the destroying *Pestilence* is one of the sorest and sharpest of them, as reckoned amongst his four sore judgements, *Ezek.* 14. 21. And as the wicked do bend their bow, and make ready their arrows upon the string, that they may privily shoot at the upright in heart, *Psal.* 11. 2. So the Lord he has his bow and arrows, and his Bow is bent also, and his arrows he hath ready, *Psa.* 7. 12. which he sends out and scatters his enemies with, *Psal.* 18. 14. With these he breaks their bones and
Pierces

pierces them through, *Num.* 24. 8. yea, makes them drunk with their blood, *Dent.* 32. 42. These are sharp in the heart of the Kings enemies, *Psal.* 45. 5. The Instruments and means that the Lord makes use of against his enemies are piercing, yea so piercing, that the heart, the closest and strongest part, even that wherein life consisteth, shall be pierced thereby. The arrows of the Lord are like the swords of *Saul* and *Jonathan* which did execution and returned not empty, *2 Sam.* 1. 22. You think by flying away and hiding your selves in the thickets of the forrest, you shall be secured from the stroke of these arrows of Gods vengeance; but know, if you are Gods Enemies and persecutors, his hand will find you out, yea his right hand will finde out those that hate him; and he will make you as a fiery oven in the time of his anger, *Psal.* 21. 8, 9. For wickedness burneth as fire, and it shall devour the briars and thorns, and shall kindle in the thickets of the forrest, and they shall mount up as the lifting up of smoke; for through the wrath of the Lord of Hosts the land shall be darkned, and the people shall be as the fewel of the fire, no man shall spare his brother, *Isa.* 9. 18, 19. I say, if you be the Lords Adversaries, then if the Scriptures be true and cannot be broken, you shall assuredly be broken in peices, yea out of heaven will the Lord thunder upon you, *1 Sam.* 2. 10. And if that will not do, he will throw you into the deeps, as a stone into the mighty waters, as he dealt with the persecutors of his people, *Neb.* 9. 12. I cannot let pass those dreadful imprecations which the Prophet *David* thundereth out against his and the Lords Adversaries, under the person of *Judas*; Set a wicked
man

man over him (saith he) Let Satan stand at his right hand; let him be condemned and his prayer become sin, and his days few, and his children fatherless, and vagabonds, begging their bread; and such like propheticall direfull wilhes; And why all this? *Because that he remembred not to shew mercy, but persecuted the poor and needy man, that he might even slay the broken in heart, Psa. 109. to ver. 17. so Psa. 69. verse 22. and onward; Let their table become a snare before them, and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap: Let their eyes be darkened that they see not, and make their loins continually to shake. Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger take hold of them. Let their habitations be desolate, and let none dwell in their tents. Add iniquity to their iniquity, and let them not come unto thy righteousness: Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous.* Now what's the reason that David doth call his and the Lords enemies to such dreadful destructions? why? even for this cause; For they persecute him whom thou hast smitten, and talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded. By all which he meaneth, that the wicked laid grievous afflictions and punishments upon such, whom the Lord in his fatherly love had chastised, whether you understand it of Christ or of his afflicted and persecuted members: This is a sin that is highly provoking unto the Lord, drawing down the wrath of God to a Kingdoms inevitable desolation and destruction; as upon Judah and Jerusalem, 2 Chron. 36. 15, 16. where it is said, That the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, or prophets, rising
up

the PESTILENCE. II

up betimes and sending, because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place. But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his Prophets, untill the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy, or no healing; because on the one side the people repented not, and on the other side Gods Justice required that their impenitency should be most severely punished. Its a similitude taken from sick bodies that are incurable; For (as Stephen said truly, whom they stoned) which of the Prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just one (meaning Christ) of whom (saith he) ye have been now the betrayers and murderers, Acts 7.52. And therefore it was that our blessed Saviour took up that sad lamentation and complaint; O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not? And what follows? Behold your house is left unto you desolate, Matth. 23.37,38. Persecution is the certain forerunner of a Nations desolation and destruction. And God does usually retaliate the sin of persecuting and destroying men upon their own heads; Let their way be dark and slippery, and let the Angel of the Lord persecute them, Psal. 35.6. As the fire burneth the wood, and as the flame setteth the mountains on fire, so persecute them with thy tempest, and make them afraid with thy storm: Fill their faces with shame that they may seek thy name: O Lord, let them be confounded and troubled for ever, yea let them be put to shame and

and perish: That men may know, that thou, whose name alone is Jehovah, art the most high over all the earth, Psal. 83. 15, 16, 17, 18. And who are they whom the Psalmist imprecates these dreadful judgements to fall upon, but Gods Enemies and Persecutors? For lo, thine enemies make a tumult, and they that hate thee have lift up the head, they have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy bidden ones. They have said, Come, let us cut them off from being a Nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance. God has his hidden ones, such whose life is hid with Christ in God, Col. 3. 3. whom the Lord esteems as his jewels, keeping them in faithful and safe custody, hiding them in the secret of his presence from the pride of man, which betake themselves to the Lord for refuge to be hid and secure under his tuition and protection, Psal. 27. 5. and 31. 20. And these are they that the enemies of God did consult and conspire against, even to extirpate them, and to root them out of the land. But see how just the Lord is in the execution of his righteous and terrible judgements upon such: Thou shalt take up this proverb (saith the Lord) against the King of Babylon and say, How hath the Oppressor ceased? the golden City ceased? the Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked, and the Scepter of the Rulers. He that smote the people in wrath with a continual stroke (mark that) he that ruled the Nations in anger is persecuted, and none hindereth, Isa. 14. 4, 5, 6. O that this were seriously laid to heart by the persecuting spirits of this generation; whether Gods controverlie with the Kingdom at this time, in this sore visitation
of

of the Plague among us, doth not in a great measure spring from this evil and bitter root; so heinous and provoking sin it is unto the Lord.

3. The third pestilential destroying sin, is the sin of Murder and Blood-shed that is exercised upon the people of God. See Jer. 50. 11, 12, 13. the dreadful threatnings of the Lord against Babylon for this very sin: *Because ye were glad (saith the Lord) because ye rejoiced, O ye destroyers of mine heritage, because ye are grown fat as the heifer at grass, and bel- low as bulls: Mark, they were the destroyers of Gods heritage, that was their sin; and now what must be their punishment? Your mother shall be sore con- founded, she that bare you shall be ashamed; behold the hindermost of the Nations shall be a wilderness, a dry land and a desert; because of the wrath of the Lord it shall not be inhabited, but it shall be wholly desolate, every one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues. So in Jer. 51. 34, 35. The Church complains there, that Nebuchadnezzar King of Ba- bylon had devoured her, and crushed her, and made her an empty vessel, and had swallowed her up like a Dragon, and filled his belly with her delicates and cast her out. What then is the Churches dreadful imprecation hereupon? but that which was menti- oned before, The violence done to me and to my flesh be upon Babylon, shall the inhabitants of Sion say, and my blood upon the inhabitants of Chaldea shall Jeru- salem say. Therefore thus saith the Lord, Behold I will plead thy cause, and take vengeance for thee, &c. And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling place for Dragons, an astonishment, a hissing without an inha-*

inhabitant. And in the 33. Verse, *The Daughter of Babylon is like a threshing floor, it is time to thresh her, yet a little while and the time of her harvest shall come.* So Rev. 18. 4. God calls his people there to come out of Babylon, and wherefore? that ye be not partakers of her sins (saith the voice from Heaven) and that ye receive not of her Plagues. So in the 8th. Verse, *Therefore shall her Plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine, and she shall be utterly burnt with Fire, for strong is the Lord who judgeth her.* And what was Babels great sin? They have shed the blood of Saints and Prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink, for they are worthy, said the Angel of the waters. Rev. 16. 6. So Rev. 17. 6. *And I saw (said John in a Vision) the woman drunken with the blood of the Saints, and with the blood of the Martyrs of Jesus: And in her was found the blood of Prophets, and of Saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth,* Rev. 18. 24. And what follows? *Allelujab, salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God, for true and righteous are his judgements; for he hath judged the great Whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand* And again they said, *Allelujab, and her smoke rose up for ever.*

For the speedy execution of which righteous judgements of God, upon this insatiable and blood-thirsty Whore, it is, that the souls under the Altar, that have been slain for the Word of God, and for the Testimony which they held, are said to cry with a loud voice, saying, *How long Lord, holy*

holy and true, dost not thou judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the Earth? To which answer is made, That they should rest yet for a little season, until their Fellow-Servants also, and their brethren that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled, *Rev. 6. 9, 10, 11.* That is, slain by Antichrist and his Ministers, who having Apostatized from the faith, should arise in the Church of Christ soon after this, and by their spiritual pride and tyranny, oppress the Church, and persecute and kill the Lords faithful Witnesses, in like manner as the Gentiles the Jews, and other false Christians had formerly done, *Rev. 11. 7. and 12. 15, 17.* Yet this is very observable, as that which may minister matter of strong consolation to the Saints suffering under Antichrists bloody persecutions, that there is the determinate time of Gods appointed Judgments, and that however for a while the Lord defers his punishments, yet he certainly hears the Prayers of his faithful servants, and at last will be fully avenged on their Adversaries. And though Antichrists rage and tyranny is very great, yet it is limited according to the purpose and decree of God, who hath determined the number of Martyrs, which number being once accomplished, not one drop of blood shall be more spilt by that man of sin, that Son of perdition; who (Satan like) worketh with all his power, compelling men by Fines, confiscation of Goods, Imprisonments, Banishments, and the like, to submit unto his ways and laws, *2 Thes. 2. 3, 9.* and that under fair and glorious pretences too, for the suppressing of Errors
and

and Heresies, for the beating down of sin; for the working of men to conformity and uniformity, and the bringing of them into obedience unto the Church; which to do, if the Ecclesiastical power is not sufficient, the Magisterial power must be made use of. But it is very evident, that the Antichristian religion, consisting for the most part in Will-worship, and in humane traditions and inventions, could never have subsisted to this day, had it not been supported by an Arm of flesh; when as our Lord Jesus with his Apostles and Disciples, never sought to the Civil Magistrate, or Powers of the World upon that accompt, nor is the Kingdom of Christ to be erected and established in this way of humane force and power. The weapons of our warfare (saith the Apostle) are not carnal, 2 Cor. 10. 4. It is the powers of the world that shall destroy the holy people, Dan. 8. 24. It is the Little Horn, the Romish Antichrist, that shall make War with the Saints, and prevail against them, until the Ancient of days come, and that judgment be given to the Saints of the most high, and that the time come that the Saints shall possess the Kingdom, Dan. 7. 21. 22. It is he, that shall speak great words against the most high, and shall wear out the Saints of the most high, &c. Until the Judgment shall sit, and then they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end, Dan. 7. 25, 26. And in one day shall Babylons Plagues come, death, and mourning, and famine, and she shall be utterly burnt with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her, Rev. 18. 8. The severity of the Lord against
this

this sin of bloodshed and cruelty, that is exercised on the Saints of God, is further set forth in that of the Prophet *Amos* Chap. 1. Vers. 11. (Thus saith the Lord) for three transgressions of *Edom*, and for four I will not turn away the punishment thereof; and why? Because he did pursue his Brother with the Sword, and did cast off all pity, and his anger did tear perpetually, and kept his wrath for ever. For this also hath the Lord a controversy with the Land; because, by killing and stealing, &c. they break out, and blood toucheth blood. Therefore shall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish, *Hosea* 4. 1, 2, 3. So in the *Psal.* 94. 5, 6. They break in pieces thy people; O Lord, and afflict thine heritage; they slay the widow, and the stranger, and murder the fatherless; yet they say, the Lord shall not see. And what then? O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thy self: Lift up thy self thou Judge of the earth, render a reward to the proud. So highly provoking is it unto the Lord, for any to have a hand in the destroying of Gods heritage; As the *Psalmist* saith, When the Lord shall make inquisition for blood, he will remember them, and not forget the cry of the humble, or of the afflicted.

4. The fourth pestilential and highly provoking sin, is the sin of *Idolatry*, which is the worshipping of false Gods, or the true God in a false manner. This is that sin, that hath greatly incensed the Lord to send this sore Judgement of the Plague or Pestilence, and the Sword among a people, *Judg.* 5. 8. It is said, they chose new gods, then was war in

the gates. When *Israel* forsook the Lord, and his true worship, and fell to the worshipping of the Idol-Gods of the Heathen, then the Lord ever and anon punished them with war. And as the Sword, so the Pestilence brake in among them for this very sin, *Psal.* 106. 28, 29. They joyned themselves also to *Baal-Peor*, and eat the sacrifices of the dead; Thus they provoked him to anger with their inventions, and the Plague brake in upon them. See *Num.* 25. 2. to which this in the *Psalms* doth referre. It is said, they called the people to the Sacrifice of their Gods, and the people did eat and bowed down to their gods. And *Israel* joyned himself to *Baal-peor*; and the anger of the Lord was kindled against *Israel*; so that there died in the Plague, no less then four and twenty thousand, and many more had been destroyed had not *Phinehas* stood up and executed judgement, and turned away the wrath of the Lord, and so the Plague was stayed, as in the 30. verse of that 106. Psalm comp. with *Num.* 25. 11. *Baal-peor* was the Idol-god of the *Moabites*, and the Daughters of the *Moabites* they called or invited the people to the sacrifices or offerings of their gods; they allured the people by fleshly baits to defile their bodies and souls with whoredom and idolatry, and the people they participated or communicated with them in their idolatry, which sin God in a special manner had forewarned them of, *Exod.* 34. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16.

Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a Covenant with the Inhabitants of the Land, whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee.

But

But ye shall destroy their Altars, break their Images, and cut down their Groves. For thou shalt worship no other God, for the Lord whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God. Lest thou make a Covenant with the Inhabitants of the Land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice to their gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice, and thou take of their Daughters unto thy Sons, and their Daughters go a whoring after their gods, and make thy Sons go a whoring after their gods. And hence it was, that the Apostle Paul dehorted the *Corinthians*, lest they should be guilty of the like sin, and so incurre the like punishment, 1 *Cor.* 10. 8. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed (meaning spiritual as well as corporal uncleanness) and fell in one day three and twenty thousand, though there was four and twenty thousand fell in all, but three and twenty thousand of them fell or perished in one day.

So when *Moses* was in the Mount with God; and the People had made them a Molden Calf, and gave it Divine Adoration, saying, These be thy gods O *Israel* which brought thee up out of the land of *Egypt*; How did the wrath of the Lord begin to wax hot against them for to consume them, had not *Moses* (his chosen) stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them; yet, saith the Lord, *Nevertheless, in the day when I visit, I will visit their sin upon them.*

And the Lord plagued the people, because they made the Calf which *Aaron* made. See *Psal.* 106. 23. comp. with *Exod.* 32. 4. and 35. verses. From

whence was that dehoration of the Apostle like-
 wise in that 1 Cor. 10. 7. Neither (saith he) be ye Ido-
 lators, as were some of them, as it is written, the people
 sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play. The
 word is used for laughing or rejoycing, Gen. 21. 6.
 here it is meant of their singing and dancing about
 the Golden Calf they had made, as in the 18. and
 19. verses of Exod. 32. as aforesaid. So Jer. 19. 3,
 4, 5. Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel,
 Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, the which
 whosoever heareth, his ears shall tingle. And where-
 fore will the Lord be so severe? Because they have
 forsaken me, saith the Lord, and have estranged
 this place, and have burnt incense in it unto other
 gods, whom neither they nor their fathers have
 known, nor the Kings of Judah, and have filled
 this place with the blood of Innocents; they have
 built also the high places of Baal to burn their Sons
 with fire for burnt offerings unto Baal, which I
 commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into
 my mind: Therefore, behold, the days come saith
 the Lord, that I will cause them to fall by the Sword
 before their enemies, &c. and their Carcases will I
 give to be meat for the fowles of the heaven, and
 for the beasts of the earth; and I will make this
 City desolate and an hissing: every one that passeth
 thereby shall be astonished and hiss, because of all
 the Plagues thereof. So Ezek. 33. 25, 26, 27.
 Wherefore (thus saith the Lord) ye eat with the
 blood and lift up your eyes towards your Idols,
 and shed blood, and shall ye possess the land? &c.
 Thus saith the Lord God. As I live, surely, they
 that are in the wastes shall fall by the Sword, &c. and
 they

they that be in the Forts, and in the Caves shall dye of the Pestilence. For I will lay the Land most desolate, and the pomp of her strength shall cease. Hence it is said, that in *Horeb* they provoked the Lord to wrath, so that the Lord was angry with them to have destroyed them, *Deut. 9. 8.* And *Deut. 32. 16, to 21.* They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations provoked they him to anger. They sacrificed to Devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom their Fathers feared not. Of the Rock that begat them they were unmindful, and had forgotten God that formed them. What then? And when the Lord saw it, he abhorred them, because of the provoking of his Sons, and of his Daughters. And he said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be.

For this sin of *Idolatry* it was that the Lord brought evil upon the house of *Jeroboam*, smiting all his house, in so much that he left not to him any that breathed, but took them away, as a man taketh away dung, till it be all gone; forsaith the Text, He made him other gods, and molten Images, to provoke the Lord to anger, and did cast the Lord behind his back. See *1 King. 14. 9.* comp. with *Chap. 15. 29.* and *30. &c.* Add to this, that in the 44. of *Jeremiah* the 7. and 8. *Vers.* Thus saith the Lord, the God of Hosts, the God of *Israel*, Wherefore commit ye this great evil against your souls, to cut off from you man and woman, child and suckling out of *Judah*, to leave you none to remain; In that ye provoke me unto wrath with the works

of your hands, burning incense unto other gods, &c. that ye might cut your selves off, and that ye might be a curse and reproach among all the Nations of the earth. So highly provoking is this sin of Idolatry unto God, as you many see further *Exod. 20. 4, 5. Dent. 6. 14, 15. and 32. 21.* which I say (that we may not be mistaken concerning it) doth consist, not only in the worshiping of Idols and false gods, but of the true God in a false manner.

It may be, thou wilt not be so gross, to fall down and give divine Adoration to an Image, yet if thou dost worship God before and by an Image, thou art an Idolater. The Image which the Jews made of the true God, is condemned of God himself *Exod. 32. 8.* and they that made it were punished as Idolaters *1 Cor. 10. 5, 7.* It is therefore a dotage in Popery, to distinguish between Idol and Image, and to make the Picture of a false god onely to be an Idol; not considering, that the making of an Image, or the likeness of God, or of any Creature in Heaven or Earth for a religious end, to give it divine adoration and worship, or to worship God by it, is Idolatry, forbidden by the Scriptures, even by the Lord himself, *Dent. 5. 8, 9. Thou shalt not make thee any graven Image, or any likeness of any thing, &c. Thou shalt not bow down thy self unto them, nor serve them.*

2ly. Idolatry may be said to be all humane inventions and traditions of men, thrust into the divine worship and service of God, *Dent. 12. 32.* Whatsoever I command you, saith the Lord, that observe and do, thou shalt not add thereto, &c. So said our blessed Saviour, *In vain they do worship me, teaching for*

for Doctrines the Commandments of men. And you transgress (or reject; frustrate and make void) the commandments of God by your traditions, *Matth.* 15.3,9. *Mark.* 7.9. Therefore all traditions and superstitions contrary to the Word of God, are to be avoided and abhorred by all who will be found worshipping of God in spirit and in truth, according to his own institution and prescription.

3ly. The setting the heart inordinately upon any creature, by fearing, loving, and trusting in it more then in God, and above God, is Idolatry in Gods account. *Phil.* 3.19. The Apostle complains of some, whose God was there belly; and the Prophet *Ezekiel* speaks of setting up of idols in the heart, *Ezek.* 14.2,4.

4ly. The immoderate love unto, and the distrustful care for the things of this life, falls under this denomination of Idolatry. Hence it is that the Apostle saith, *That no unclean person, or covetous man who is an Idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God, Eph.* 5.5. the one makes his lust, the other his money his God. And the Apostle in *Col.* 3.5. among other the sins and lusts of the flesh, calls Covetousness Idolatry; For which things sake (saith he) the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience. All these kinds of Idolatries by the Apostle *Peter* are exprest I conceive, under the name and title of abominable Idolatries, *1 Pet.* 4.3. Hence it is, I suppose, that *John* in the conclusion of his Epistle hath this exhortation to the beleivers of his time, *Little children keep your selves from Idols.* Now all Idols being vanities, and the work of errors, which in the time of their visitation shall pe-

rich, *Jer. 10. 15.* Then it must needs follow, That they that observe lying vanities, forsake their own mercy, *Jon. 2. 8.* And this is the fourth Pestilential sin, so highly provoking the Lord:

5. The fifth pestilential destroying sin, is the sin of *Covetousness*, consisting in a greedy inordinate desire after gain, unto which evill whosoever is subject is the servant and slave of all other sins. So insatiable and unsatisfied he is, that like the man that hath the Dropsie, the more he drinketh, the more he thirsteth. This sin of Covetousness is called Idolatry, *Col. 3. 5.* and *Ephes. 5. 5.* Because the covetous person not only prefers his treasure before God, but doth place the happiness and felicity of his life in his substance; like the fool in the Gospel, *Luk. 12. 15, 16.* And what sin is there that is more provoking unto the Lord, or that pulls down more the wrath of God upon a Nation or Kingdom, as I instanced before, then the sin of Idolatry? For which things sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience, *Col. 3. 6.* So abhorring a sin it is unto the Lord, *Psal. 10. 3.* The wicked blesseth the Covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth. And therefore I finde it rankt with those other aforementioned so highly provoking sins of *Bloodshed, Oppression and Persecution*, *Jer. 22. 17.* But thine eyes and thine heart are not but for thy covetousness, and for to shed innocent blood, and for oppression, and for violence to do it. And what before? Wo unto him, that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong: Shalt thou reign because thou clo-
sest

fest thy self in cedar; Did not thy father eat and
 drink, and do judgement and justice, and then it
 was well with him? &c. *Jer. 22. 13, 15.* The like
 woe or denunciation of judgement against this vile
 provoking sin, you have in *Isa. 5. 8, 9.* Woe unto
 them that joyne house to house, that lay field to
 field, till there be no place; that is, for the poor to
 dwell, that they may be placed alone in the midst of
 the earth. And mark what follows, *In mine ears*
said the Lord of Hosts, of a truth many houses shall be
desolate, even great and fair without inhabitants.
 O that our great Builders and Inclosers of our
 times, would seriously lay this Scripture to heart.
 How many houses now hath God made desolate in
 City and Suburbs? how many great and fair dwel-
 lings now stand empty without an inhabitant? You
 have the like woe denounced in *Micha 2. 1, 2, 3.*
Wo to them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon
their beds, &c. and they covet fields, and take them by
violence, and houses and take them away, so they op-
press a man and his house, even a man and his heri-
tage; And what follows hereupon? *Therefore thus*
saieth the Lord, Behold against this Family do I devise
an evil, from which ye shall not remove your necks,
neither shall ye go haughtily, for this time is evil.
 Mark, I pray you, its said they covet fields, and
 houses, and take them by violence; If they do but
 fancy or get a mind to such and such a piece of
 Land, to such a House, or such like possessions,
 they will have it, and force it away from the owners
 thereof; As *Ahab* in the case of *Naboths Vine-*
yard, 1 King. 21. And thus they oppress, or
 practise violence upon a man and his house, even a

man and his heritage, or his inheritance, that is, they make him poor and sad, dispossessing and bereaving the Proprietor thereof, which God would in no wise allow to be taken away, or alienated from the heir. *Therefore, saith the Lord, Behold I devise an evil against this Family, or against this generation*: Even as they wickedly devise, contrive and practise the evil of sin; so do I now devise the evil of punishment, that shall be executed upon them; from which ye shall not remove your necks; the yoke of bondage which ye shall be made to undergo, shall be so close and strong upon you. And from whence proceeds all these evil inroachments, these violent oppressions and practises, but from this evil and bitter root of covetousness? Against which the Prophet *Habakkuk* comes forth with the like woe, and denunciation of judgment; *Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil.* And mark what follows? *Thou hast consulted shame to thy house, by cutting off many people, and hast sinned against thy soul; For the stone shall cry out of the Wall, and the beam out of the Timber shall answer it. Woe to him that buildeth a Town with blood, and establisheth a City by iniquity. Behold, is it not of the Lord of Hosts, that the people shall labour in the very fire, and the people shall weary themselves for very vanity, Hab. 2. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness, that he may set his nest on high, that is, that seeks and practises by all manner of base, unworthy, and unwarrantable ways, to enrich him-*
self,

self, his wife, children, and posterity, that he and his family may rise and become great and famous in the world, and live secure and safe. A similitude taken from the Eagle and such Birds, as love to build their Nests in high places. *Obad. 4.* Well, but consider a little what thou art doing all this while in contriving to be so great; Thou hast but consulted shame to thy house, saith the Lord, as if he had said, Thou hast (setting all honour and honesty aside) raked much riches together, and raised great and stately Palaces and Places, and filled and adorned the same with all manner of rich and sumptuous furniture, yet all this speaks but thy own shame and infamy, because thou hast accumulated, and heaped all this together, by thy covetous and unworthy practises. And thou hast sinned against thy own soul in all that thou hast done. *And therefore the stone out of the wall shall cry; The very Stones wherewith thy Palaces are built, shall testify against thee, namely, that thou hast built them unrighteously, by wronging, and injuring of others, which call aloud to God for vengeance against thee. And therefore woe to him that buildeth a City with blood, or bloods, as it is in the Original; that is, with murder, or with the goods of him or them that are slain or murdered, or with the sweat and blood of the people. Ezekiel calls it the bloody City; Woe to the bloody City, I will even make the pile for fire great, Ezek. 24. 9. So the Prophet Nahum; Woe to the bloody City, or City of bloods, it is full of lies and robberies, the prey departeth not. And therefore, Behold, it is not of the Lord, that the people*

people shall labour in the very fire, and weary themselves for vanity? It is of the Lord surely, it comes to pass by the secret counsel of God, that these Houses and Cities which they build, shall either come to be consumed by fire; And what dreadful fires hath hapned amongst us of late days? or else the people shall weary themselves in vain, for vanity and to no purpose; seeing it comes so soon to be destroyed and ruined, what they build.

Therefore saith the Lord, Behold, I have smitten my hand at thy dishonest gain which thou hast made, and at thy blood which hath been in the midst of thee, Ezek. 22. 13. intimating an abhorring of their wickedness, and a purpose to proceed against them in fury, as is expounded in Ezek. 21. 17. I will smite my hands together, and I will cease my fury to rest; I the Lord have said it. All holding forth the Lords great displeasure against this fore evil, which is more evidently manifested, by consulting some few Verses more in that 22. of Ezekiel, beginning at the 24th. Verse. Son of man, say unto her, Thou art the land that is not cleansed, nor rained upon in the day of indignation. As if the Lord had said, Thou art the Land that is not amended or reformed by my Judgements, and punishments, that hath not had her showers of rain to cleanse thee; my judgements will not cleanse thee. As a great showre of rain (you know) is wont to cleanse and wash away the filth and dirt of the streets; Thy filthiness remains still unwashed away: But how comes this to pass? There is a conspiracy of her Prophets in the midst thereof,

of, like a roaring Lyon ravening the prey: they have devoured Souls: And what else? They have taken the Treasure and precious things: they have made her many Widows in the midst thereof. They did devour the godly mens estates, and bereaved the Women of their Husbands, by their false accusations, and evil practises, causing them to be put to death.

This was that devouring of Widows houses, which our blessed Saviour so sharply reproveth, the Scribes, and Pharises, and Hypocrites of those days; and all under a pretence of making long Prayers. Therefore, said he, ye shall receive the greater damnation, Mat. 23. 14. Much like to what the Prophet Micha spake of in his day, Micha 3. 1, 11, 12. They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity. The heads thereof judge for reward, and the Priests thereof teach for hire, and the Prophets thereof divine for money; Observe that, Yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, is not the Lord among us? none evil can come upon us. The Priests taught for hire, that is, out of a covetous disposition, they suffered themselves to be drawn for money to Teach and Preach according to mens Palates, like to those which Paul spake to Titus of, who subverted whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake, Tit. 1. 11. Whereas they should have been content with Gods allowance, and held forth the pure Word of God without regard to men. In whose mouths the Law of truth should be, and in whose lips iniquity should not be found; Mal. 2. 6. Thus for the Priests; Then for the Prophets, they did

did divine for money, meaning the false Prophets. The Lord implying here, that both in the Civil and Ecclesiastical State among his people all was corrupted, and to be bought and sold for money; According to what the Prophet *Isaiah* complained in his time, *Isa. 1. 23. Thy Princes are rebellious and companions of Thieves; every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards, they judge not the Fatherless, neither doth the cause of the Widow come unto them.*

Or as he proceeds further in *Ezek. 22. 26, 27. Her Priests have violated my law, and have profaned my holy things; they have put no difference between the holy and profane, nor between the unclean and the clean. Her Princes in the midst thereof are like roaring wolves, ravening the prey, to shed blood and to destroy souls, and to get dishonest gain. And yet says the Prophet Micah, They did lean upon the Lord. How lean upon the Lord? not with a holy trust and confidence (which is ever accompanied with godliness) but in hypocrisy, out of an impudent arrogance, and a vain, bold and carnal presumption; as if God was engaged to protect them, let them live and do what they pleased; Like those that the Prophet *Isay* speaks of, That swore by the name of the Lord, and made mention of the God of *Israel*, but not in truth, nor in righteousness; And yet they called themselves of the holy City, and staid themselves upon the God of *Israel, Isa. 48. 1, 2.* Or like unto them in the Prophet *Jeremies* time, that cried *The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord*, and yet in the mean time they oppressed the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed innocent blood,*

and

and did steal, and murder and commit adultery, and swore falsely, *Jer.* 7. 4, 6, 9. But how intollerable this was with God, the sequel makes it evident; Therefore shall Sion for your sakes be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, that is, shall be utterly destroyed and laid waste; So little care and regard had God of Sion and Jerusalem, and of his holy Temple it self, being thus polluted and defiled. And therefore saith the Lord (in *Ezekiel* 32 ult.) have I poured out mine indignation upon them, I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath: Their own way have I recompensed upon their heads, saith the Lord. So again, for this doth the Lord threaten, That their houses shall be turned unto others, with their fields and wives together. And he will stretch out his hand upon the inhabitants of the land. For (saith he) from the least of them even unto the greatest of them, every one is given to Covetousness, and from the Prophet even unto the Priest, every one dealeth falsely, *Jer.* 6. 12, 13. Which avaricious or covetous disposition was so predominant in them in the Prophet *Isaiah's* time, *Isa.* 56. 10, 11. That he termed the *Watchmen* then (which were the Priests and Rulers of the people, as *Jer.* 8. 10. and *Ezek.* 3. 17.) not only blind, and ignorant, and dumb dogs that could not bark, &c. but greedy dogs also, that could never have enough. Like dogs strong in desire, in lust, in appetite, greedy and unsatiable, that could not be satisfied with money or large revenues. And what follows in the next chapter v. 17. For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, said the Lord, and smote him; and whether this might not be a smiting with the pestilence,

Dent.

Deut. 28. 22, 27. comp. with Ezek. 33. 27. and 31. verses; I shall leave it to the wise to judge. How did he smite Gehazi with the Plague of Leprosie for this thing? 2 King. 5. 27. so highly provoking a sin, is this sin of *Covetousness* unto the Lord. And oh, that this were wisely considered and applied by the men of this Generation, yea by the carnal and earthly minded Professors of our times. For sure it is, *That the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows,* 1 Tim. 6. 10.

6. The sixth Pestilential destroying sin, is the sin of *Cursing*, and *Swearing*, and *False-swearing*. This was the sin of *Simei* that cursed *David*, mentioned in the 2 Sam. 16. 5. And see how the Lord did return his wickedness upon his own head, being slain by the Command of King *Solomon*, 1 King. 2. 44, 46. This the Psalmist lays down as the certain Character of a wicked man, *that his mouth is full of Cursing and deceit*: And what imprecations does he use in his Prayer against him? *Break thou the Armes of the wicked, and the evil man: Seek out his wickedness till thou find none*, Psal. 16. 7, 15. Rom. 3. 14. So in the 109. Psal. Let Satan stand at his righthand, and when he shall be judged, let him be condemned, and let his prayer become sin, let his days be few, his Children Fatherless, his Wife a Widow, his Children Vagabonds, and beg their bread: Let their be none to extend mercy unto him, let his Posterity be cut off, and in the generation following, let their name be blotted out, let the iniquity of

of his Fathers be remembred with the Lord, and let not the sin of his Mother be blotted out, and let the Lord cut off the memory of them from the earth. And mark what follows. As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him; as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him. As he cloathed himself with cursing like as with a Garment, so let it come into his bowels like water, and like oyle into his bones. Let it be unto him as the garment which covereth him, and for a girdle wherewith he is girded continually. It is true the Apostle Peter doth apply something of this to Judas, who betrayed our Lord Christ, Act. 1. 20. But it cannot exclude all other the cursed enemies of Christ, who love cursing, and cloath themselves with it as with a garment. So Jer. 23. 9, 10. *Mine heart within me (saith he) is broken, because of the Prophete, all my bones shake, &c. because of the Lord, and because of the words of his holiness. For the Land is full of Adulterers, for because of Swearing the Land mourneth.* To this agreeth that of the Prophet Hosea Chapter 4. 1, 2, 3. verses. Where it is said, That the Lord hath a Controversie with the Inhabitants of the Land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the Land. By swearing and lying, &c. they break out and blood toucheth blood: Therefore shall the Land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish. The dreadfulnes of this sin is further set forth by Zacharies flying roll, Zach. 5. 3, 4. This is the Curse that goeth forth, over the face of the whole earth, for every one that stealeth shall be cut off, and every one that sweareth shall be cut off, &c. I will bring it forth,

D

saith

saith the Lord of Hosts, and it shall enter into the house of the Thief, and into the house of him that sweareth falsely by my name; and it shall remain in the midst of his house, and shall consume it with the Timber thereof, and the Stones thereof. And in the 3. of *Malachy* and the 5. I will come near to you to Judgement, and I will be a swift witness against the Sorcerers, and against the Adulterers, and against False swearers.

O that these things were seriously laid to heart by the prophane Cursers, and Swearers, and False-swearers, and the Damne-creatures of our times. O that they would consider, how their cursed hellish hideous, new-invented, unheard of, Diabolical oaths, do now make the Land mourn, and those that dwell therein to languish! and how near the Lord is come unto them in the terribleness of his judgment! Is it not very evident that the Lord for these things hath a controverſie with the Inhabitants of the Land?

7. The seventh Pestilential destroying sin, is the sin of *Adultery*, *Fornication*, and such like corporal uncleanness. See this in that 25. of *Num.* 1, 6, 7, 8. verses. When *Israel* abode in *Shittim*, it is said the people began to commit Whoredome with the daughters of *Moab*. And *Zimri* and *Cosbi* being taken in the very act of uncleanness, *Phinehas* the Son of *Eleazar*, the Son of *Aaron* the Priest, when he saw it, he rose up from amongst the Congregation, and took a Javelin in his hand, and he went after the man of *Israel* into the Tent, and thrust both of them through, the man of *Israel*, and the woman through her belly: So the Plague

was

was stayed thereupon from the Children of Israel, yet those that died in the Plague, as was mentioned before, was no less then Twenty and four Thousand. So in the 12. of *Gen.* 14, 15, 17. When Abraham came into Egypt with Sarai his wife, a fair woman to look upon, and she was no sooner beheld by the Egyptians, and the Princes of Pharaoh, but they commended her before Pharaoh; and saith the Text, the woman was taken into Pharaohs house, that is, she was taken away from Abraham, into the Royal Seraglio or Palace, to be fitted and prepared there, according to the Custome of those Countries, that the King might take her to Wife, as *Hest.* 2. 9. In the mean time God provided for Abrahams entertainment, and his Wives chastity together; for Pharaoh entreated Abram well for her sake. And in the 17. verse is said, *The Lord plagued Pharaoh and his House with great Plagues, because of Sarai, Abrams wife.* What kind of plagues those were is uncertain, but doubtless they served as well to hinder and obstruct the abusing of Sarai's body, as to punish the King, and his Domesticks, and Courtiers trespass. This great deliverance David celebrateth in *Psal.* 105. 14. *When they went from one Nation to another, from one Kingdom to another People. He suffered no man to do them wrong, yea, he reprov'd Kings for their sakes, saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my Prophets no harm.*

But this is observable, that if the Lord was so severe to punish this filthy sin of Adultery, or Uncleanneſs, when it was but designedly or intentionally committed (and Pharaoh knew not that Sarai was Abrams wife) with what severity may we think

will he proceed against such, who deliberately, knowingly, delightfully and impudently live in the perpetration and commission of it? and when did this sin of Whoredom, Adultery and Fornication ever walk upon down so brazen-faced, with such an imperious worish forehead, as in the men and women of our generation? so unsatiabable they are in their filthiness and uncleanness. Upon which account may not the Lord say to this City of London, yea to the Land and Nation in general, as he did to Jerusalem in the Prophet *Jeremy's* time? *How shall I pardon thee for this? thy children have forsaken me, and sworn by them that are no gods: When I had fed them to the full, they then committed Adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots houses. They were as fed horses in the morning, every one neighed after his neighbours wife; Through lustfulness, like wanton horses: And mark what follows? Shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord? and shall not my soul be avenged on such a Nation as this? Go ye up upon her walls and destroy, but make not a full end; take away her battlements, for they are not the Lords, &c. Jer. 5. 7, 8, 9, 10. And may we not think the Lord may justly have a controversie with the inhabitants of this Land, as he had with the children of Israel in the Prophet *Hosea's* time; And wherefore? Because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land; But by swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing Adultery they break out, and blood toucheth blood. Therefore shall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish, &c. *Hos. 4. 1, 2, 3.* So that good Prophet *Jeremy*, Mine heart (saith he) within*

within me is broken, because of the Prophets, all my bones shake, I am like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine hath overcome, because of the Lord, and because of the words of his holiness. For the Land is full of *Adulteries*, *Jer.* 23. 9, 10. And in *Jer.* 13. 27. I have seen thine *Adulteries*, and thy neighings, the lewdness of thy Whoredoms, &c. What then? *Wo. unto thee O Jerusalem.* This, though it may have reference to their sin of Idolatry, as before, which may be called spiritual Adultery, yet it cannot exclude that which is corporeal, which God will severely punish; For *Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge, as such, who shall have no inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God*, *Heb.* 13. 4. and *Eph.* 5. 5. Thus we see how highly provoking this sin of uncleanness is for the bringing down of National judgements, even this of the Pestilence among a people.

8. The Eighth Sin that provokes the Lord to send the Pestilence among a people, is the sin of *Infidelity, distrust and murmuring against God*, notwithstanding the great and marvellous works which the Lord hath wrought for the salvation and deliverance of his people. See to this purpose the 13, and 14. chapters of *Numbers*; There were certain men, the heads of the children of *Israel*, who by the commandment of the Lord was sent to search and spie out the land of *Canaan*, and being returned they made a rehearsal thereof to *Moses* and *Aaron*, and to all the congregation, and brought an evil report upon the land which they had searched, saying, The land through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabi-

tants thereof, and all the people that we saw in it
 are men of a great stature: And there we saw the
 giants, the sons of *Anak*, which come of the gi-
 ants, and we were in our own sight as Grasshop-
 pers, and so were we in their sight. This evil re-
 port caused all the congregation to lift up their
 voyce and cry, and to murmur against *Moses* and
Aaron, saying, Would God that we had died in
 the land of Egypt, or would God we had died in
 this wilderness. And wherefore hath the Lord
 brought us into this land to fall by the sword, that
 our wives and our children should be a prey? were
 it not better for us to return into Egypt? and they
 said one to another, *Let us make a Captain, & let us re-
 turn into Egypt.* But *Joshua* the son of *Nun*, and *Caleb*
 the son of *Jephunneth*, which were of them that fear-
 ched the land, rent their cloaths, and they spake unto
 all the company of the children of *Israel*, saying, The
 land which we passed through to search, it is an ex-
 ceeding good land, if the Lord delight in us, then
 he will bring us into this land, and give it us, a land
 which floweth with milk and honey, *Only rebell not
 ye against the Lord, neither feare ye the people of the land:
 for they are bread for us: Their defence is departed from
 them, & the Lord is with us: feare them not:* this so great-
 ly incensed the congregation, that they baded stone
 them with stones. But see how highly provoking
 was this unto the Lord: *And the Lord said unto
 Moses, How long will this people provoke me, and
 how long will it be ere they beleive me, for all the signs
 that I have shewed among them? And mark what
 follows; I will smite them with the Pestilence and
 dis-inherit them,* verse 12. *I the Lord have said, I
 will surely do it unto all this evil congregation, that*
are

are gathered together against me; in this wilderness they shall be consumed, and there they shall die. And further it is said, That the men which Moses sent to search the land, who returned and made all the congregation to murmur against him, by bringing up a slander upon the land, even those men that did bring up the evil report upon the land, died of the Plague before the Lord, *vers.* 35, 36, 37, of the 14. of *Numb.* And the Lord renders the reason why their carcases should fall in the Wilderness, *v.* 22. *Because all those men which have seen my glory (saith he) and my miracles which I did in Egypt, and in the wilderness, & have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkned to my voice, surely, they shall not see the land, which I swore unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it.* So greatly displeasing it is unto the Lord, for a people who have seen the wonderful works of the Lord, and his miraculous preservations, to cherish a murmuring, distrusting and unbeleiving spirit against the Lord; not beleiving his promises, nor relying on his mighty power, and outstretched arm to defend them. And therefore saith the Psalmist, *was the Lord wroth, and a fire was kindled against Jacob, and anger also came up against Israel, Because they beleived not in God, and trusted not in his salvation,* Pl. 78. 21, 32. So in *Heb.* 3. 17, 18, 19. *With whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcases fell in the wilderness? And to whom swore he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that beleived not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.* For this cause it was that the Lords wrath was kindled against them, so that he excluded them out of the good land, Be-

cause they beleived not in God, nor hearkned unto his voyce, but murmured against him, after they had seen his glory, to wit his glorious works, and the miracles that he did in Egypt and in the wilderness. See *Exod.* 16. 2, 3. comp. with *Nehem.* 9. from the 10th. to the 18th. verse. O then that this might be seriously laid to heart, by all such, who having seen the wonderful outgoings, and appearances of God in this latter age of the world, and had a deep share in the glorious deliverances which God had wrought have yet through a heart of infidelity and distrust departed from God, & thereby brought up an evil report upon the good land, even the good and honourable ways of the Lord, shaking hands again with a carnal, corrupt interest, and longing after the flesh-pots, the Onyons and Garlick of Egypt, have turned again to the weak and beggarly elements or rudiments of the world, whereunto they are, as in Egyptian bondage, again captivated and enslaved.

For I intend not here by this spirit of Infidelity and Unbeleif, such carnal, unbeleiving and regenerate persons, to whom, as the Apostle saith, *2 Cor.* 4. 3, 4. the Gospel is hid, and are lost, and whose minds the God of this world hath blinded, that the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ cannot shine into them; but such rather, who with open face, having beheld as in a glass the glory of the Lord; even the glory of his grace in the Gospel, and the glory of his great and wonderful works in the world, do yet through base fear, and distrust of his power and promises, suffer their hearts to depart and turn aside from the Lord. And this was the sin of *Aza*, who when the Lord had delivered

livered into his hand a huge host of the *Ethiopians* and *Lubims*, because they relied on him, did afterwards rely on the Kings of *Syria*, and not on the Lord his God; For which he received so sharp a rebuke from the Lord, *2 Chron.* 16. 7, 8, 9.

9. The ninth Pestilential sin, is the sin of *Discontent*, accompanied also with a spirit of *distrustfulness* and *unbeleif*; When a people will not be content with Gods allowance, but will loath his blessings and his provisions, and fall a lusting after evil things to satisfy their inordinate desires. This was *Israels* provoking sin, *Numb.* 11. 4. The multitude that was among them fell a lusting, and they wept and said, *Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish which we did eat in Egypt freely, the Cucumbers, and the Melons, and the Leeks, and the Onions, and the Garlick; but now our souls is dried away, there is nothing at all besides this Manna before our eyes: Though it was the corn of heaven, and Angels food that they eat, and such as did prefigure Christ himself, his word and grace, Job.* 6. 31, 32, 33. and *1 Cor.* 10. 3. yet now they look upon it, and count it but as a despicable thing; and nothing now would satisfy them but flesh, and this to satisfy their lust. And therefore it is said in the 78 Psalm and the 18th. verse. *They tempted God in their heart by asking meat for their lust; yea they spake against God and said, Can God furnish a table in the Wilderness? Behold, he smote the rock that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; Can he give bread also? Can he provide flesh for his people? Therefore the Lord heard this and was wroth: So a*
fire

fire was kindled against Jacob, and anger also came up against Israel, &c. Well, nothing would satisfie their lusts but flesh, and flesh they shall have with a witness, till it come out at their very nostrils, and was loathsom unto them, so they did eat and were filled; for he gave them their own desire: they were not estranged from their lust; but while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, The wrath of the Lord was kindled against the people, and the Lord smote the people with a very great plague: And the name of that place was called Kibroch-battanab (that is, the graves of lust) because, there they buried the people that lusted.

Hence it was that the Apostle treating of the bountiful dealings of God with the children of Israel, said, That with many of them God was not well pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things (saith he) were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted, 1 Cor. 10. 5, 6. This is a sore evil, an intestine evil, a sickness indeed, that gnaws and torments the very heart, called therefore the Plague of Discontent, which many of the people of God themselves, as well as the men of the world are too too often infected with, when not contenting our selves, I say, with the mercies and blessings which God affords us, we fall a lusting after evil things, as the Israelites hereafter flesh, to satisfie their lusts, loathing the heavenly Manna which God gave them: And our desires oftentimes are so inordinate after them, that like unto Rachel in the case of her barrenness (though otherwise blest with many comfortable enjoyments) we are crying

ing out, *Give me children or else I die*, Gen. 30.1. I cannot live, my life will be a burden unto me if I have not this or that; I must have it whatever it cost me, though I part with half of my estate; nay, with *Herod*, it may be to the half of the Kingdom, for his *Herodias* sake, because she pleased him; and to satisfy this lust, *Off must go John Baptists head*, Mark 6.22,23,24. Or like unto *Haman*, who though he was so highly promoted in King *Ahasuerus* Court, Yet (saith he) *all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the Kings gate*, Hest. 5.13. *Mordecai* could not bow the knee, nor do him that reverence, as his proud ambitious heart panted after, and this sowres all other his great advancements and enjoyments, and now nothing will satisfy him less then his destruction, and the total destruction of all the Jews, Hest. 3.9.

So violent are persons set upon the satisfying of their lusts oftentimes, though it be to their own hurt: This was the sin of the *Israelites*, they could not content themselves that God was their King, and that he should reign over them, but they must have a King to reign over them, like unto other Nations; rejecting the Lord and his Government, who himself had saved them out of all their adversities and tribulations, 1 Sam. 8.5,6,7. and chap. 10.19. And how great this wickedness of theirs was in the sight of the Lord, the signal testimonies of his displeasure did evidently declare it, 1 Sam. 12.17. So is it not just with God when a people falls a loathing of the heavenly Manna of Gods Word (and where hath the Gospel been more powerfully preached, and more obstinately con-
temned

temned then in *England*?) that the Lord should send a famine in the Land, if not a famine of bread and a thirst for water, yet a famine of hearing the Words of the Lord, *Amos* 8. 11. O that this was seriously laid to heart, and fruitfully applyed both by Professors, as by the prophane persons of this Nation. So dangerous and destructive a thing it is to cherish a carnal dissatisfied and discontented spirit against the Lord.

10. A tenth Pestilential and God-provoking Sin, is the sin of *Pride* and *Ambition*, and a trusting in an Arme of flesh, not relying on the mighty power and faithfulness of God. This was *Dauids* sin in of numbring the people, which was followed with a sore Pestilence among them. See the second of *Samuel* 24. Chap. comp. with *1 Chron.* 21. 1. Satan he provoked *David* to number the people, that he might know how many valiant men there were in *Israel*, that could draw the sword. And questionless *Dauids* heart was lifted up hereby, when *Joab* gave up the sum of the number of the people unto him, there being in *Israel* eight hundred thousand valiant men that drew the sword, and the men of *Judah* were five hundred thousand. And what should move *David* to such a thing but a proud ambitious desire to know the strength and number of his men of war, accompanied with a distrustfulness of the mighty power of God, and his All-sufficient arme, which had so often saved and delivered him out of the hands of *Saul*, and from the hand of all his enemies. As in the 18th. *Psal.* wherein he praiseth God for his manifold and marvellous deliverances. For this *Dauids* heart smote him, acknowledging that he had sinned greatly

greatly in what he had done, and prayeth that the Lord would take away his iniquity, for he had done very foolishly. Yet the Lord would shew his justice, & make all the world to see and know, that he will not indulge sin, no not in his dearest Servants, and most beloved Saints; but if they sin they must expect to suffer and smart for it. As *Amos 3. 2.* *You only have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.* And therefore he puts *David* upon his choise of three things, whether the *Famine*, the *Sword*, or *Pestilence* he would make choise of, and this did put him into a great streight, but he chose rather to fall into the hands of God, then into the hands of men, for that the mercies of the Lord are great. So the Lord sent a *Pestilence* upon *Israel*, from the morning even to the time appointed, and there died of the people from *Dan* even to *Beersheba*, *Seventy thousand men*. And when the Angel stretched out his hand upon *Jerusalem* ready to destroy it, it is said, the Lord repented him of the evil, and said to the Angel that destroyed the people, *It is enough, stay now thy hand.* This also was *Edoms* sin, *Jer. 49. 16, 17, 18.* Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, & the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock: That holdest the height of the hill: though thou shouldst make thy nest as high as the Eagle, I will bring thee down from thence saith the Lord. Also *Edom* shall be a desolation, every one that goeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss all at the plagues thereof. As in the overthrow of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, and the neighbour Cities thereof, saith the Lord, *No man shall abide there, neither shall a Son of Man dwell in it.* This was
King

King *Asa's* sin before mentioned, in the 2 *Chron.* 16. 7, 8, and 9. vers. so sharply reprov'd and punished by the Lord. For this was a dreadful wo denounced against the Inhabitants of *Jerusalem*, *Isa.* 30. 1, 2, 3. *Wo to the rebellious children (saith the Lord) that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may adde sin to sin. That walk to go down into Egypt (and have not asked at my mouth) to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt. And mark what follows. Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt your confusion. Which caused the Lord to take up that bitter complaint, Jer. 2. 12, 13. Be astonished, O ye heavens at this, and be horribly afraid: Why? whats the matter? My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken me the Fountain of Living Water, and hewed them out Cisterns, broken Cisterns that can hold no water. All other things to relye upon besides God, will prove but as broken Cisterns. Therefore said David at another time, when his faith and confidence was strong in God. I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me. Through thee will we push down our enemies, through thy name will we tread them under that rise up against us, Psal. 44. 5, 6. Yea, we have the Lord himself declaring, that the salvation of his people must proceed from himself, and not from any secondary causes, Hos. 1. 7. But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the Lord their God, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battel, by horses, nor by horsemen.*

Take we heed then of any presumptuous relying on our own strength, or of strengthening our selves in the strength of any creatures, whether Armies, or Parliaments, or Navies, or any sinful confederacies or Associations of men whatsoever, Isa. 8. 9. *Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arme, and whose heart departeth from the Lord,* Jer. 17. 5. But let us say with the Church, Hos. 12. 3. *Assur shall not save us, we will not ride upon horses, neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, ye are our Gods.* As if they had said, We will not put our trust any more in men, we will confide no more in any humane means, nor send abroad for help and confederacies, all besides thee being vanity, and the relying on it apparent ruine. Therefore we will trust in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord *Jehovah* is everlasting strength. For he bringeth down them that dwell on high, the lofty City he layeth it low, he layeth it low even to the ground, he bringeth it even to the dust. The foot shall tread it down, even the feet of the poor, and the steps of the needy, Isa. 26. 4, 5, 6. So dangerous and destructive a thing it is to have a heart lifted up, putting confidence in an arme of flesh, and not relying on the Lord our God. For it is he that sheweth strength with his arme, and that scattereth the proud in the imagination of their hearts, Luk. 1. 51.

11. The eleventh provoking Pestilential destroying Sin, is the sin of *Apostacy, Back sliding, and Revolt*ing from God, Jer. 2. 18, 19. And now what hast thou to do (saith the Lord) in the way of Egypt to drink the waters of Sihor? or what hast thou to do in the way of Assyria, to drink the waters of the river?

ver? Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy back-sliding shall reprove thee: Know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that my fear is not in thee; saith the Lord of Hosts. So in the 36. verse. Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way? thou also shalt be ashamed of Egypt. And now behold, how the Lord for this did threaten, that his judgement, even this of the Pestilence should overtake them, Jer. 42. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17. We will not dwell in this land (say they) nor obey the voice of the Lord your God; No, but we will go into the land of Egypt, where we shall see no war, nor hear the sound of the trumpet, nor have hunger of bread, and there will we dwell. And now therefore hear the Word of the Lord, ye remnant of Judah, thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel; If ye wholly set your faces to enter into Egypt, and go to sojourn there: What then? Then it shall come to pass, that the Sword which ye feared shall overtake you there in the land of Egypt, and the Famine whereof you were afraid shall follow close after you there in Egypt, and there ye shall dye; so shall it be with all the men that set their faces to go into Egypt to sojourn there, they shall dye by the Sword, by the Famine, and by the Pestilence, and none of them shall remain or escape from the evil that I will bring upon them.

And says further, that as his anger and fury had been poured forth upon the Inhabitants of Jerusalem, so should his fury be poured forth upon them, when they should enter into Egypt, and they shall be an execration, and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach, and should see the place (meaning the land of Judea) no more. So in the 19. verse,

O ye

O ye remnant of Judah, go ye not into Egypt; and now I have this day declared it unto you, but ye have not obeyed the voice of the Lord your God, &c. Now therefore know certainly that ye shall dye by the Sword, by the Famine, and by the Pestilence, in the place whither ye desire to go and to sojourn. So in the 44. Chap. of Jer. 13. ver. For I will punish them that dwell in the land of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, by the Sword, by the Famine, and by the Pestilence. To which I shall add that in the 14. of Jer. 10. and 12. vers. Thus saith the Lord unto the people, Thus have they loved to wander, they have not refrained their feet: therefore the Lord doth not accept them, he will now remember their iniquity, and visit their sins. Then said the Lord unto me; Pray not for this people for their good. When they fast, I will not hear their cry, and when they offer burnt-offering, and an oblation, I will not accept them: but I will consume them by the Sword, and by the Famine, and by the Pestilence. So dreadful and dangerous a thing it is, for a people brought out of Egyptian bondage and darkness, to long after the Fleth-pots, the Leeks, and the Onions, and the Garlick of Egypt again. For if any man draw back (saith the Lord) my soul shall have no pleasure in him, Heb. 10. 38. And as for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity, but peace shall be upon Israel, Psal. 125. 5.

O that this were well considered by all such who have Apostatized and Revolted from the Lord and his ways, in this sinful and back-sliding generation. Who as the Prophet Hosea says, Are profound to make slaughter, though the Lord is a Rebuker of them

all, *Hos. 5. 2.* Who once did appear to be forward assertors of the Cause of righteousness and truth; but now say a Confederacy, with all such as say a Confederacy, *Isa 8. 12.* Who once did seem to escape the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; but are now again intangled therein and overcome, turning with the Dog to his own vomit again; and with the Sow that was washed, to the wallowing in the mire. Let such know, *That their latter end will be worse with them then the beginning,* 2 Pet. 2. 20, 21, 22.

12. The twelfth Pestilential and highly provoking Sin, is the sin of Rebellion, and Obstinate Disobedience against God and his Commandments, *Levitic. 26. 23, 24, 25.* And if ye will not be reformed by these things (saith the Lord) but will walk contrary unto me, then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins. And I will bring a sword upon you, that shall avenge the quarrel of my Covenant; and when ye are gathered together within your Cities, I will send the Pestilence among you, and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy. So *Deut. 28. 15, 16, 20, 21.* If thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his Commandments, and his Statutes, &c. These curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee; Cursed shalt thou be in the City, and cursed shalt thou be in the field, &c. The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke in all that thou settest thy hand for to do until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly. And wherefore?

fore? Because of the wickedness of thy doings whereby thou hast forsaken me. The Lord shall make the Pestilence cleave unto thee until he hath consumed thee, and the Lord shall smite thee with a Consumption, and with a Feaver, and with an Inflammation, and with an extreame Burning, and with the Sword, and with Blasting, and with Mildew, and they shall pursue thee until thou perish. So in the 58, and 59. vers. If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this Law, that are written in this Book, that thou mayst fear this glorious and fearful name; *The Lord thy God*. Then the Lord will make thy Plagues wonderful, and the Plagues of thy seed, even great plagues, and of long continuance; and sore sicknesses, and of long continuance. So *Deut.* 29. 22, 23, 24, 25. The Generations to come when they shall see the Plagues of the Land, and the sicknesses which the Lord hath laid upon it; and that the whole Land is Brimstone, and Salt, and Burning, &c. like the overthrow of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, &c. which the Lord overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath.

Even all Nations shall say, *Wherefore hath the Lord done this? What meaneth the heat of this great anger?* Then men shall say, *Because they have forsaken the Covenant of the Lord God of their Fathers, &c.* To this agrees that of the Prophet *Jerem.* 29. 17, 18, 19. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Behold, I will send upon them the Sword, the Famine, and the Pestilence, and will make them like vile figgs, that cannot be eaten they are so vile. And I will persecute them with the Sword, with the Famine, and with the Pestilence, and will deliver them to be removed to all the Kingdomes of the Earth, to be a Curse, and an Astonishment, and a His-

sing, and a Reproach among all the Nations, whither I have driven them. And wherefore will the Lord be so severe against them? Because they have not hearkened to my words, saith the Lord, which I sent unto them by my servants the Prophets, rising up early and sending them, but ye would not hear, saith the Lord. So Ezek. 6. 11. Alas for all the evil abominations of the house of Israel: for they shall fall by the Sword, by the Famine, and by the Pestilence; He that is far off shall die of the Pestilence, and he that is near shall fall by the Sword, and he that remaineth, and is besieged, shall dye by the Famine. Thus will I accomplish, saith the Lord, my fury upon them, Ezek. 7. 15. The Sword is without, and the Pestilence and the Famine within, he that is in the Field shall dye with the Sword, and he that is in the City, Famine and Pestilence shall devour him. And why? Violence is risen up into a rod of wickedness, v. 11. The rod hath blossomed, pride hath budded. So Ezek. 14. 19, 21. If I send a Pestilence into that Land, and pour out my fury upon it in blood, to cut from it Man and Beast, though Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it; As I live, saith the Lord, they shall deliver neither Son nor Daughter, they shall but deliver their own souls, by their righteousness. For thus saith the Lord God, How much more when I sent my four sore Judgements upon Jerusalem, the Sword, and the Famine, and the noysome Beast, and the Pestilence, to cut off from it Man and Beast? And when will the Lord execute this great severity, and be so inexorable? the 13. vers. declares it, When the land sinneth against me, saith the Lord, by trespassing grievously.

I shall

I shall conclude with that in the Prophet *Amos* Chap. 2. ver. 4, 5. Thus saith the Lord, For three transgressions of Judah, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof: Because they have despised the law of the Lord, and have not kept his Commandements, &c. And what follows? I will send a fire upon Judah, and it shall devour the Palaces of Jerusalem. So *Amos* 4. 10. &c. I have sent among you the Pestilence after the manner of Egypt, your young men have I slain with the Sword, and have taken away your horses, and I have made the stink of your Camps to come up into your Nostrils; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. So incorrigible hard-hearted and un-reformed were they under all the fore Judgements, that the Lord had inflicted upon them: Yet before he will make an utter destruction, he invites them once again to repentance. Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel, and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God O Israel.

Thus you see what a high provoking sin it is to rebel against God, and his Commandments. As *Samuel* said to *Saul*, when he disobeyed the Word of the Lord. Rebellion is as the sin of Witchcraft, and Stubornness is as Iniquity and Idolatry, 1 Sam. 15. 23. And if God was so severe to punish the transgressions of the law, with what severity will Christ proceed against the willful contemners, and disobeyers of his Gospel? according to that of the 2d. of the Heb. 2, and 3. vers. If every transgression and disobedience, received a just recompence of reward, that is, of punishments inflicted on them: How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? that is, the Gospel, which is called a Ministry of the

spirit and of life, whereas the law is a killing letter, or the ministration of death and condemnation, 2 Cor. 3. 6, 7, 9. *And the wrath of God cometh upon the children of (Gospel) disobedience; Ephes. 5. 6.*

13. The thirteenth pestilential and highly provoking sin, is the sin of *Insurrection and rising up against the Lords lawful Governours and Government, whether Civil or Ecclesiastical, in Church or Commonwealth.* This was the sin of *Corah, Dathan and Abyram* and their copartners, mentioned in *Num. 16.* God had chosen *Moses and Aaron* to be the cheif Leaders and Governours of his people, and placed the Government in their hands, both as to the Civil and Religious administration thereof; *Korah* and his companions gather themselves together against them, and told them they took too much upon them, seeing all the Congregation was holy, every one of them, and that the Lord was among them, wherefore then should they lift up themselves above the Congregation of the Lord? But see how highly incensing and provoking was this unto the Lord; *Separate your selves (saith he to Moses and Aaron) from among the congregation, that I may consume them in a moment;* and now the Lord he will shew who are his, and who are holy, and a strange work will he do; these men must not dye the common death of all men, nor be visited after the visitation of all men, but a new thing will the Lord make, The earth must open her mouth and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they must go down quick into the pit; and so they did, and the earth closed upon them, and

and they perished from among the Congregation.

Nor did the punishment of this Insurrection end here, but the Lord causes a grievous Plague to break in upon the Congregation. And Moses said to Aaron, in the 46. verse, *Take a censur and put fire therein from off the Altar, and put on Incense, and go quickly unto the Congregation, and make an attonement for them; and why all this haste? For there is wrath gone out from the Lord, the Plague is begun: And Aaron did so, and stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was staid.* Now they that died in the plague, were fourteen thousand and seven hundred, besides them that died in the matter of Corah; So highly displeasing is it unto the Lord, for persons to oppose his lawful Authority and Government which he hath put into the hands of his faithful Ministers and Servants. Under which consideration undoubtedly must those Scriptures be comprehended that enjoin subjection and obedience, whether to the Lords Civil or Ecclesiastical Rulers and Governors, *Rom. 13. 1. Tit. 3. 1. 1 Pet. 2. 13, 14, 15. 1 Theff. 5. 12, 13. Heb. 13. 7, 17.* O that this were seriously and timously considered and laid to heart, by all such who flye in the face of Christ, and carry themselves contemptuously against his lawful Governours and Government which he hath set in his Churches, I mean the Churches of Christ, making unjustifiable and dishonorable rents, schisms and divisions in the body whereof they are members, which should be as the seamless coat of Christ, woven from top throughout, *Job. 19. 23.*

Of such who despise the Lords Government or

Dominion, I may say without wronging or injuring of them, as *Peter* of some scandalous backsliding Professors in his time, who were spots and blemishes in their feasts of Charity; *Presumptuous* are they and self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of Dignities, 2 Pet. 2. 10, 13. And while they promise themselves liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption. vers. 19. They despise Dominion; The word it seems signifieth, a removing of a thing from its place, with some scorn and indignation: They would remove the Lords Governors or Rulers over them, with scorn and indignation; And whereas they are said to despise dominion, that is more then to despise their Rules; for they despise not only the Lords Governors, but the Government it self. And to speak evil of Dignities, or to reproach Dignities, is in the Original it seems to blaspheme Glories, to speak reproachfully of Dominions which are placed in glory amongst men, or which are set over them by the Lord, in eminency, power, honour and authority. Hence it is that lawful Magistrates ruling in the fear of the Lord, are said to be Gods, Psal 82. 6. And the Lords Ministers and Messengers of Churches, are said to be the Glory of Christ, 2 Cor. 8. 23. And as stars in his right hand are the Angels of the seven Churches, Rev. 1. 20. All holding forth that Glory and Dignity which the Lord hath conferred upon them. And for any persons to rise up, as *Korah* and his complices did against *Moses* and *Aaron*, though it be in a presumption of their own holiness, Numb. 16. 3. Such are like to perish in the gainsaying of *Core*, as *Jude* expresseth, vers. 11. of his Epistle. It being very observable, how the Psalmist does express this act of *Korah's* Insurrection, or rising up against *Moses* and

and Aaron, to be no less then an envying of them ; They envied Moses also in the camp, and Aaron the Saint of the Lord. The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan, and covered the company of Abiram. And a fire was kindled in their company ; the flame burnt up the wicked, *Pla.* 106. 16, 17, 18. That example also of Miriam and Aarons speaking against Moses is not to pass without its due observation neither, *Numb.* 12. 1, 7, 8, 9, 10. The Lord giving that testimony of Moses his servant, that he was faithful in all his house ; Wherefore then (saith he) were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses ? And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them, and Miriam became leprous, as white as snow. Let such therefore who are guilty in this matter, consider how provoking a sin this is unto the Lord, and whether they may not have a hand in pulling down this sore visitation among us.

14. A Fourteenth Pestilential, and highly provoking sin, is the sin of *Prophanation* of Gods holy things, and an *Over-curious*, presumptuous speculation, and prying unwarrantably into the Secrets of God. This was the sin of the men of *Asdod*, for which the hand of the Lord was so heavy upon them, visiting them with greivous plagues, when they took the *Ark* and brought it into the house of *Dagon* (the Temple of their Idol-god) and set it by *Dagon* ; so sore was the hand of God on them that he smote them with Emrods, and destroyed them, and such a deadly destruction there was throughout all the City, insomuch that the cry of the City went up to heaven, *1 Sam.* 5. The Ark was a Chest or Coffer, which was made of Shittim or Cedar wood, overlaid roundabout with gold, whose cover, called the *Mercy-seat* was also of pure gold, on which was two glorious Cherubs

rubs of gold, from whence God gave his oracles,
Numb. 7.89. These Cherubims were placed at the
 the two ends of the Mercy-seat. and they spread out
 their wings on high, which covered over the
 Mercy-seat, with their face, one to another, *Exod.*
 37.1,2,6,7,8,9. In this were the two Tables of the
 Law or Testimony put, written with the finger of
 God, *Exod.* 25.16,21. *Dent.* 10.3,4,10. Between
 the Cherubims God was said to sit, *Psal.* 80.2.
There will I meet with thee (saith the Lord) *and*
will commune with thee from above the Mercy-seat,
between the two cherubims, which are upon the Ark
of the Testimony, verse 22. Now this Mercy-seat
 on which God did thus sit between the wings of
 the Cherubims was a figure of Christ, by whom
 our transgressions of the law are forgiven and co-
 vered, *who is the propitiation for our sins,* 1 *Joh.*
 2.2. And therefore called the Propitiatory, *Rom.*
 3.15. To this glorious seat, where Gods presence
 with his Church was manifested, the Throne of God
 is answerable in the Christian Church, in the pre-
 sence of which Throne his people are, and serve him
 day and night in his Temple, *Rev.* 7.15,17. 8.3.
 21.3,5. Now this Ark being thus a type or figure
 of Christ and of his Church, and of his glorious
 presence with the same, its no wonder if the Lord
 shall so severely punish the prophanation of it,
 when men shall set it in the Temple of *Dagon*.
 Surely if the Ark stand there *Dagon* must fall, yea
 and it shall fall before the Ark of the Lord, which
 is called the Ark of his strength. *Psal.* 132.8. And
 when the Ark set forward, then *Moses* said, *Rise up*
Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered, and let them
that hate thee flee before thee. God cannot endure

to have his holy things prophaned, that the abomination of delolation shall stand in his holy place; that men shall set their thresholds by Gods thresholds, and their posts by Gods posts, by defiling his holy name with their abominations, *Wherefore* (saith the Lord) *I have consumed them in mine anger;* No surely, the place of the soles of his feet, where he will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever, and his holy name he will not suffer to be defiled, but he will beautifie the place of his sanctuary, and make the place of his feet glorious, *Isa. 60. 13.* comp. with *Ezek. 43. 7, 8.* Let men take heed then of offering strange fire before the Lord, which he commandeth them not, lest there comes out fire from the Lord and devoureth them; as in the case of *Nadab* and *Abihu* the sons of *Aaron*, who for this cause died before the Lord. And what said *Moses* to *Aaron* thereupon, *This is that that the Lord spake saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified,* *Lev. 10. 1, 2, 3.* So likewise when men will be presumptuously and unwarrantably prying into the secrets of God, see how severely the Lord hath punished this evil; as in the case of the men of *Beth-she-mesh* said, whom the Lord sorely smote, because they looked into the Ark of the Lord, even he smote of the people Fifty thousand and threescore and ten men, and the people lamented, because the Lord had smitten many of the people with a great slaughter. And the men of *Beth-she-mesh* said, *Who is able to stand before the holy Lord God?* *1 Sam. 6. 19, 20.*

So dangerous a thing it is to be over-curiously presumptuous in looking into the *Arcana Dei*, the secret

secret and hidden things of God, which he hath not revealed. Therefore it was that the Lord had commanded, that Aaron and his sons, even they, and not others, should take down the covering vail, and cover the Ark of the Testimony with it. And thus do unto them (saith the Lord) that they may live and not die, when they approach unto the most holy things, Aaron and his sons shall go in and appoint them every one to his service and to his burden. But they shall not go in to see when the holy things are covered, lest they dye, Numb. 4. 19, 20. See also Levit. 8. 35. So exact was the Lord for the keeping of his charge. It is sad to consider, how wise some men have seemed to be above that which is written, calculating persons, and things, and times for the meridian of their own brain; like those lying Prophets which the Lord sent not, nor spake unto, wherefore he complained that they prophesied unto the people a false vision and divination, even a thing of nought and the deceit of their heart, Jer. 14. 14. So in Ezek. 13. 6, 7, 8, 9. They have seen vanity, and lying divination, and they made others to hope, that they would confirm the word; See now the severe punishment of the Lord against such; Behold, I am against you, saith the Lord God, and mine hand shall be upon the Prophets that see vanity, and that divine lies; they shall not be in the Assembly of my people, neither shall they be written in the writing of the house of Israel, neither shall they enter into the land of Israel. But setting aside such gross lying Prophets, it is sad to think how many professing the fear and knowledge of God, have been over-curiously prying into Gods secret counsels, and the hidden purposes of his minde, limiting, and

and prescribing the holy one of *Israel*, advancing, and extolling the idle phantasies, and enthusiasmes of their own brains, more then the declarative mind and will of God, contained in the Scriptures of truth. But whatever may be mens pretensions to high, inward unscriptural revelations of God, let us not be believing every such spirit, but trying the spirits, whether they are of God or no; and for this reason, *Because many false Prophets are gone out into the world, 1 Joh. 4. 1.* And what saith *Peter*, *We have also a more sure word of prophesie* (more sure then the voice, which they heard to come from Heaven, when they were in the Holy Mount) *whereunto ye do well* (saith he) *that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the Day dawn and the Day-star arise in your hearts, 2 Pet. 1. 19.* Ever remembering that in *Deut. 29. 29.* *That secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed, belong unto us, and to our children for ever.*

15. The fifteenth and last thing, that I shall briefly speak of as a Pestilential destroying sin, is that of *Adding or Diminishing from the Word of God*; for which the Lord Jesus hath threatned such dreadful plagues and punishments. For *I testifie* (saith he) *unto every man that beareth the words of the Prophesie of this Book.* If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this Prophesie; What followeth then? God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy City, and from the things which are written in this book. That man may

may be said to add, that shall mix other things, besides what the Lord Jesus hath revealed by his Angel; He addeth, that adjoyneth a lye: For whatsoever is patched to the Scriptures of mens inventions, that it might be accounted as divinely revealed, or the pure Oracles of God, is a lye. Such are the Papal unwritten traditions, or other writings of men whatsoever, which are made with them of like Authority with the written word of God, and which added to the Scriptures are lies. So he takes away, that not onely derogates from the Divine Authority of Gods book; but he also, that any ways changeth, or maliciously perverteth, or contradicteth any thing therein written. Christ will have the integrity, sincerity, and sacred Authority of this Prophecie to be faithfully preserved in the Churches, and that the contemners, falsifiers, and corrupters thereof, be no way suffered under the pain of *Anathema*, or dreadful curse. For if falsifiers of Coin are lyable unto the civil curse of the law: much more shall the *Anathema* of eternal damnation be inflicted upon the corrupters of the Scriptures, which are the words of God. *These with the Beast, and the false Prophet, shall the Lord cast into the Lake of fire burning with brimstone, Rev. 19. 20.* This is a dreadful sin, drawing down the Lords severest plagues and punishments. Therefore take we heed that we add not unto the word which God commands us, nor diminish ought from it, but that we keep the Commandments of the Lord our God which he commandeth us, *Deut. 4. 2.* And mark well the reason that Solomon giveth: Every word of God (saith he) is pure, he is a shield to them that put their trust in him. And consider what follows.

Add

Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar, Prov. 30. 5, 6.

Having now spoken of the several Sins which so highly provoke the Lord to pour down his sore Judgements; even this of the *Plague* or *Pestilence* among a people. I shall now come to speak of some special spiritual Remedies, which may be fitly applied, and made use of, as Sovereign Antidotes and Preservatives to prevent the further spreading of this pestilential contagious disease among us.

1. **T**He first spiritual Receipt, that I shall then prescribe unto thee, who ever thou art that gettest in thy hand, and readest this little tract,

Consider seriously, and let thy thoughts dwell long upon those Sins, that I have insisted on, as such which are the procuring Cause of this so sore a visitation from the Lord; and entering into a diligent scrutiny, and examination of thine own heart and ways: Consider how far thou hast been, or art a partaker of those sins, which have so highly provoked the Lord to send down this National Judgement of the *Plague* and *Pestilence* among us. For if we stand guilty of the same Sins, how then shall we think to escape the like punishment? This was the way and course the Apostle took, when speaking of Gods displeasure against the Israelites, whereby many of them were overthrown in the Wilderness; how does he bring it home by way of special application. *Now these things* (saith he) *were our Examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted.* Neither be ye Imitators,

laters, as were some of them, &c. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one Day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of Serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the Destroyer. Now all things happened unto them for examples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come, 1 Cor. 10. 5, 6, to the 11, and 12. ver. So say I as from the Lord. As to the first Pestilentiall sin of Oppression. Did the Lord plague Pharaoh, and his Land, with sore and dreadful plagues, even this of the destroying Pestilence, for his cruel oppressions, which he exercised over the bodies and consciences of Gods people; Take heed then that thou art not found an Oppressor of the true worshippers of Jesus, the spiritual Israel of God: Take heed of exalting thy self against God, in seeking still to hold the spiritual Seed under Egyptian captivity and bondage. See, that thou lets them go to sacrifice to the Lord God, as he has commanded them. Take heed of ruling over them with rigour, and making their lives bitter with hard bondage. Take heed ye rich men, that ye do not oppress the poor. Know that the Lord surely looks upon the afflictions of his people, and hears their cry by reason of their Task-masters, and will come down to deliver them, Exod. 3. 7, 8.

So to those that are the Bishops, Elders, and Overseers, the Spiritual Rulers, and Leaders of the flocks of Christ. Take heed that ye be not Lords over Gods heritage, but examples to the flocks: See that ye feed the flocks of God, taking the

the oversight of them, *not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind,* 1 Pet. 5. 2, 3. Take heed that ye do not exercise a dominion over their faith, but are helpers of their joy; 2 Cor. 1. 24. Take heed that ye do not eat the fat, and cloath you with the wool, and kill them that are fed: Take heed that with force and cruelty, ye rule not over them. So then to all that oppress, whether in one kind or another, see that ye undo heavy burdens, and let the oppressed go free, and break every yoke; else, surely the Lord will visit for these things, and his soul will be avenged on such a Nation as this.

2. So for the Sin of *Persecution*, and *Hatred* against God, and his people. Hath the Lord ordained the Arrows of his Indignation, even the Instruments of Death against the Persecutors? and will he strike them into the hearts of his Enemies? O, then take heed, that thou art not found a hater of God, and a Persecutor of the people of God, lest the Arrow of the destroying Pestilence, that flyeth at noon day, do light upon thee, and the Angel of the Lord persecute thee.

3. So for the Sin of *Murder* and *Bloodshed*. Hath the Lord threatned his sore plagues against the Destroyers of his heritage? and will he avenge the blood of his Servants, at the great whore of *Babylons* hands? and is there a time when the Lord will make inquisition for blood? Then beware that thou hast not a hand in killing, and destroying the Saints of the most high God. And take heed, that thou partake not of *Babylons* sins, lest thou receive of her plagues. For the Lord will avenge the blood of his Servants, and will render vengeance to his Ad-

versaries, and will be merciful unto his land, and to his people, Deut. 32. 43.

4. So for the fourth Pestilential and highly provoking Sin of *Idolatry*. Was the anger of the Lord so kindled against *Israel*, when *Israel* had joyned himself to *Baal-peor*, that no less then four and twenty thousand died in the plague? And did the Lord plague the people, because of the Calf they had made? Then beware that ye be not Idolaters as were some of them, and provoke the Lord to anger with your inventions. For surely the Lord our God is a jealous God, his glory he will not give to another, neither his praise to Graven Images, Isa 42. 8.

5. So for the Sin of *Covetousness*, and a greedy desire after gain. Is it a sin so abhorring unto the Lord? does the wrath of the Lord come upon the Children of disobedience, because of it? Has the Lord denounced so many woes against it? and threatned to smite with his plagues, and punishments for it? O then beware of Covetousness, and being greedy of gain, lest thou be a troubler of thine house, Prov. 15. 27.

6. So for the Sin of *Cursing*, and *Swearing*, and *False-swearing*. Is it, that because of Swearing the Land mourns, and the Lord had a Controversie with the Land, because of it? And that the Curser shall be cloathed with his Cursing, as with a Garment? and it shall come into his bowels like water, and the Curse shall enter into the house of the False-swearer? O then, beware that thou art not found in these sins, lest these dreadful Judgments of God fall upon thee.

7. So for the seventh Pestilential destroying Sin, namely, the sin of *Adultery*, *Fornication*, and such like

like corporeal filthiness and uncleanness. Did the Lord so severely punish the sin of *Zimbri* and *Cosby* who were taken in the act of uncleanness, that no less then twenty four thousand died in the plague? And did the Lord plague *Pharaoh* and his house with great plagues, because of *Sarai*, *Abrams* wife? Then beware thou beastly Adulterer, thou filthy Fornicator, and unclean Liver, lest the like severity of God take hold of thee. Even as *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, and the Cities about them, in like manner, giving themselves over to Fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, *Jud. 7.*

8. So for the Sin of *Infidelity*, *Distrust* and *Murmuring* against God, the eighth provoking Pestilential sin. Did those men that brought up an evil report upon the good Land (distrusting God for all the Signs that he had shewed among them) dye by the plague before the Lord? And did the Carcasses of those who murmured against the Lord fall in the Wilderness, so that that they could not see the promised Land? O then take heed how thou cherish a murmuring, distrusting, and unbelieving heart against God. Take heed of raising up an evil report upon the good land, thereby weakening the hands, and discouraging the hearts of those, who would be found walking in the beautiful paths of the Lord, and be faithful in their generation.

9. So for the Sin of *Discontent*, loathing Gods blessings, and his provisions, and lusting after evil things, to satisfy their inordinate desires, the ninth provoking Pestilential sin. Did the Lord smite the people with a very great Plague, for this

very evil? Then take we heed that we lust not after evil things, as they also lusted.

10. So for the Sin of *Pride*, *Ambition*, and *Vain-glory*, trusting in an arm of flesh, and not relying on the mighty power and faithfulness of God. Did the Lord for this sin of *David*, send a Pestilence among the Children of *Israel*, so that there dyed of the people Seventy thousand men? O then take we heed of a proud, vain-glorious spirit, and that we trull not in an arm of flesh.

11. So for the Sin of *Apostacy*, *Back-sliding*, and *Revolting* from God. Did he Lord often threaten that for this sin he would consume them by the Sword, the Famine, and the Pestilence? O then take we heed that we do not Apostasie, and Back-slide in our spirits from the Lord.

12. So for the Sin of *Rebellion*, and *Obstinate Disobedience*, against God and his Commandments. Did the Lord for this sin threaten, that he would send the Pestilence among them, and make it cleave unto them, until he had consumed them? O then beware, that thou sin not against God, and his Commands, with an Obstinate, Rebellious, and disobedient heart.

13. So for the Sin of *Insurrection*, and rising up against the Lords lawful Governours and Government. Did the Lord so severely deal with *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, and their Complices, and Co-partners for this evil; not visiting them after the common visitation of men, causing also the *Plague* to break in among them, so that there died thereof, Fourteen thousand and seven hundred? O then take we heed of this so highly provoking Pe-
stilential sin.

14. So for the Sin of *Prophanation of Gods holy things*, and an *Over-curious, Presumptuous speculation*, and prying unwarrantably into the secrets of God. Was the hand of the Lord so heavy upon the men of *Ashdod*, and also upon the men of *Beth-shemish* for this sin, so that he smote them with a deadly destruction, even of the people, Fifty thousand and threescore and ten? O then see that we are not guilty of this so highly provoking Pestilential sin.

15. So for the last Pestilential destroying Sin of *Adding or Diminishing* from the word of God, for which the Lord hath threatned such dreadful plagues and punishments. O take thou heed of this so highly provoking sin, lest the Lord add unto thee his plagues, and take away thy part out of the Book of Life.

Having now seriously considered, what those sins are, that so highly provoked the Lord to send down this sore visitation, of the Plague or Pestilence among a people; see I say, that thou enter then into a diligent search, and examination of thine own heart and ways to find out the sin or sins, which thy Conscience shall tell thee thou standest guilty of before the Lord: Whether it be the sin of *Oppression, Persecution, Murder, Idolatry, Adultery, Covetousness, Cursing or Swearing, Infidelity, Discontent, Pride, Apostacy, Disobedience*, or any other of the forementioned provoking evils. And see that thou art very exact, and not slight, and superficial, in this manner of self-examination. This is the exhortation of the Lord, by his Prophet *Zephaniah*, Chap. 2. 1, 2, *Gather your selves together, yea, gather*

ther together, O, Nation not desired: thus is it rendered in our Translation, but other Trallations read it thus: Search your selves narrowly, yea search your selves narrowly, O people, not worthy to be desired. Before the Decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you. I finde the Hebrew word signifies thus much; First, To gather your wits together, that was before disperfed upon vanity. Secondly, To frame your selves to purge away your spiritual chaff. Thirdly, To search narrowly, as for a lost jewel, or hid mine. The true sence is, Eater into your selves; search, try and examine all your ways and doings, that ye may rightly understand how heavily and greivously God must needs be offended with your great and manifold sins. And mark the reason why they should be so diligent and industrious in this work; Before the Decree bring forth: That is, before that doth come to pass, which is decreed by God against you; Gods Decree is then said to bring forth, when it cometh to be executed. As the bringing forth of a woman doth not follow presently after the conception, but in the appointed due time: So also is the Decree of God not brought to light, by the execution of it, until the time determined and appointed by himself.

Before the day pass as the chaff] that is, very swiftly, suddenly, like chaff, the day is passing away, therefore whiles ye have time yet, before the day that runs and wears away so fast, does bring forth the Decree, produce and make appear what God hath decreed against you. O Nation undesirable, search your selves, yea search your selves
very

very narrowly, whiles the heat of the Lords wrath doth not yet come upon you; whiles the day of the Lords wrath doth not yet take hold of you. This is further inculcated and prest by the Lord in the Prophesie of the Prophet *Haggai*, chap. 1. 5, 7. *Is it a time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses (that is, in your stately and sumptuous houses, for pleasure and delight) and this house lye waste, or desolate, meaning the Lords house: Now therefore, thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Consider your ways; Or which is more agreeable to the Original, Set your heart upon your ways: Observe and consider well how it fares with you, by reason of your sins. Had they considered, or set their hearts aright upon their ways, this might have prevented the execution of Gods judgements mentioned the 9, 10, and 11, verses thereof. For want of this the Lord by the Prophet *Isaiah* ch. 1. takes up a bitter lamentation and complaint; Hear O Heavens, and give ear O Earth; for the Lord hath spoken: I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The Ox knoweth his owner, and the Ass his masters scrib: but Israel doth not know, my people (saith he) doth not consider. They were more brutish and void of understanding then the beasts or brute creatures. For want of this consideration it was, that every one turned to his course of sin, as the horse rusheth into the battel, breaking and running through like a water flood, as the word is properly used. And why? Because no man said What have I done? And the Lord complaineth further, That the Stork in the Heaven knew her appointed times, and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the Swallow did observe the time of*

their coming, but his people knew not the judgement of the Lord, Jer. 8. 6, 7. This is that consideration which we ought to have of our selves: But what strangers are most men and women to their own hearts? who enters into such a serious thought as to say, *What have I done?*

Seneca reporteth of *Senicius*, how every night before he slept he asked his own heart, *What evil this day hast thou amended? what vice hast thou resisted? in what part art thou bettered?* Surely such a course as this, would prevent the fearless and heedless running into many gross enormities and sins; and so prevent the ruine and destruction of many a poor sinful soul. This course the Church took in the *Lamentations*, *Wherefore doth the living man complain? a man for the punishment of his sins? Let us search and try our ways, and turn again unto the Lord*, Lam. 3. 39, 40. Fall then in good earnest upon this work of self-examination; and think it better to know thine own infirmities, and thy soul-sicknesses and sores, then to know the whole world, and all the wonders thereof; It is one of the best parts of wisdom to know thy self: This will beat down thy pride, and keep thee humble, and lead thee to the true knowledge of God; It will cast out and keep out sin, and preserve thee from many temptations; It is the beginning and foundation of grace and repentance, Lam. 3. 40. And will prevent the severe stroak of Gods judgments, as in that of *Zephany*, 2. 1, 2. And saith the Apostle, *If we will judge our selves, we shall not be judged of the Lord*, Surely did we but know what the heart of man is, while unregenerate and in its natural estate; what a sink, a sea of

sin

sin and filthiness it is; how deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, as *Jeremy* hath it, *Jer.* 17. 9. what infinite intricate windings and turnings there are in the dark laborinths of mans heart; what a multitude of vain thoughts do lodge within it, *Jer.* 4. 14. What swarms of lusts and uncleanness issue out from this corrupt and putrified fountain, *Mat.* 12. 34. comp. with chap. 15. 18, 19, verses. What a deal of self-sophistry and imposture is wrapt up there; by which millions of souls are inwrapped in the snares and shackles of Satan; I say did we rightly know, and were not strangers to these things, it might put us on with all seriousness and readiness this so weighty and profitable a work.

But O where is the man almost, that knows, or sets himself in good earnest for to know and find out the Plague of his own heart! O what a many of *Plague-sores*, and *running issues* are in the hearts of men and women at this day, and yet they are insensible of them. Every one almost is sensible of the Plague-tokens, or sores when they seize upon the body, and most people fear and dread this contagious disease, because of the loathsomeness of it, but for the Plague of the Heart, the Soul-sickness and sores, O where is there any knowledge or discerning of it! where is there any sense of the loathsomeness and infectiousness of it! And yet without this, how can we expect a healing? and the removal of this severe stroke of the Lord? according to *Solomons* prayer, at the dedication of the Temple, *1 King.* 8. 37, 38, 39. *If there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence, &c. whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness there be: what prayer and supplication soever be made by any man, or by all the people Israel (and*
mark

mark what follows?) which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands towards this house: Then hear thou in Heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest (for thou, even thou onely knowest the hearts of the children of men.) Now this prayer of Solomon had its confirmation from the Lord, 1 King. 9. 3. So that this knowledge of the Plague of the heart, is a necessary qualification or ingredient to go along with that prayer, which shall be prevailing with the Lord for the removal of the Pestilence out of the land or Nation wherein it is. But if the men of this generation are still unacquainted with the plagues or sores of their own heart, if they be still as vain, as proud, as oppressing, as Superstitious, as Idolatrous, as Adulterous, as Murderous, as Blasphemous, as Rebellious and Disobedient against the Lord and his commands, as reviling and persecuting the way of truth and holiness as ever, can it be expected that the hand of the Lord should be removed, or the fire of his indignation, which now burns so very hot among us, should be quenched?

Set thy self then in good earnest upon this heart-searching work, whoever thou art that would escape this severe stroke of the Lord. And if thou knowest not how to deal with thy heart, it is so treacherous and vile, put up Davids prayer unto the Lord, in Psal. 139. 23, 24. Search me O God, and know my heart, try me, and know my thoughts; And see if there be any way of wickedness in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. If there be any pernicious, hurtful, or oppressing way in me; and lead me up-

on

on the way of eternity, upon that way which may lead me to eternal life. But know, that if thou wilt be careless and neglective still of this so necessary a work, and put the Lord upon it, he will then make a very strict and diligent search, and see what will be the sad event and consequent of it, *Zeph. 1. 12. And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees, that say in their heart, The Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil. And what follows? Therefore their goods shall become a booty, and their houses a desolation: they shall also build houses, but not inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, but not drink the wine thereof. Then the mighty man shall cry bitterly. And God will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk as blind men, because they have sinned against the Lord, and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung, and at that time, neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lords wrath, but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: For he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land. And when is this time that the Lord will make this strict and diligent search as with candles? ver. 7. declares it, It is in the day of the Lord, when he prepareth a sacrifice, and shall bid his guests. And in that day of the Lords sacrifice, then will he punish the Princes, and the Kings children, and all such as are cloathed with strange apparel, that leap on the threshold, and fill their Masters houses with deceit. O England, then be exhorted to consider thy ways, that thou mayst find out thy hideous provoking abominations before*

fore the Lord make a speedy riddance. This is the first spiritual Receipt I would prescribe unto thee.

The Second Receipt.

Having made this diligent search Into thine own heart, and found out thy soul-pestilent sores, then the next spiritual Receipt I shall prescribe unto thee, *Is a good draught of a sound and sincere Repentance:* Which if sound and sincere will operate these four things in thee;

First, A kindly mourning in secret before the Lord, 1. For thine own iniquities. 2. For the sins and abominations of the times.

Secondly, It will breed a hatred and abhorrency in thy heart against those evils, together, with an humble confession and acknowledgement of them.

Thirdly, A willing forsaking, and renunciation of them.

Fourthly, A returning unto the Lord with all thy heart. Surely as to this Receipt, we may write a *Probaturum est*, its a tried Receipt, a sure Remedy, a sovereign Plaster for this running sore. *Repent and turn your selves from all your transgressions (saith the Lord) so iniquity shall not be your ruine, Ezek. 18. 30. So in v. 32. Turn your selves, and live ye; for why will ye die O house of Israel?* But more particularly to the several branches of Repentance as they are laid down.

First, then see, that the true sense of thy sin does work thy heart to a kindly mourning and sorrowing for the same in secret before the Lord. This sorrow and contrition for sin, will I say, evidence the soundness and sincerity of thy Repentance, when thou canst mourn before the Lord, not only

only in respect of the danger which thou hast incurred by reason of thy sins, to wit, the curses of this life, temporal death, and eternal plagues and torments in another world, but also that thou hast so unkindly grieved and provoked so good a God, so compassionate a Father, so gracious a Redeemer, so blessed a Sanctifier, and incurred the loss of so great a God, even the favour of so good and gracious a God, that taketh no pleasure in the death of the wicked, *Ezek. 33. 11.*

This is that godly sorrow, that the Apostle *Paul* speaks of, *2 Cor. 7. 10, 11.* that worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of; the notable effects whereof are there also demonstrated and declared; which will be of such singular efficacy and force to quench the fire of the Lords indignation and wrath, now broken out among us. In the seventh of *Ezekiel*, the Lord threatening the final desolation of *Israel*, telling her that her end was come, and that he would judge her according to her ways, and recompence upon her all her abominations; *That the Sword was without, and the Pestilence and Famine within*; and that he that was in the field, should die with the sword; and that he that was in the City, Famine and Pestilence should devour him. In verse 16, he tells us *That they that escape of them* (meaning those that should escape the common calamity of the Sword, Pestilence and Famine) *they shall be on the mountains like Doves of the valleys, all of them mourning every one for his iniquity*: that is, for his own iniquity shall every one mourn as Doves of the valleys. The word signifieth a making a stir by sighing, whining and howling.

So

So *Hezekiah* in the time of his sickness, tells us, *That he did mourn as a Dove*, Isa. 38. 14. Such will be the gracious temper and disposition of soul of the Lords escaped ones: They shall mourn every one for his own iniquity, as Doves in the Valleys, in their secret retirements with the Lord; the sence and remembrance of their sins, in dishonouring and grieving so good & gracious a God, will make them to sob and sigh, and even to howl before the Lord. So did *Ephraim*, when he repented, and turned unto the Lord. *I have surely heard Ephraim* (saith the Lord) *bemoaning himself*, Jer. 31. 18. In this spirit and temper will the Lords escaped remnant be found in.

So in *Israels* restoration, when the Lord shall gather them from the Coasts of the Earth, in what spirit shall they then be found? *They shall come with weeping* (saith the Lord) *and with supplications will I lead them*, as in the 9th. vers. of the same Chap. with weeping for their sins, and with supplications or petitions unto the Lord for mercy and pardon. And suitable to this, is that in the 3d. of *Zephan*. 18. *I will gather them that are sorrowful* (saith the Lord) *for the solemn assembly, to whom the reproach of it was a burden*.

Those that are sad and sorrowful, because they are obstructed and hindered from meeting in the Temple of God, in the Assemblies of his Saints, for the solemn worship and service of God; when they must converse with and among such scoffing Companions, which make but a mock and derision of God and his Word. In this gracious temper and frame of spirit was *David* in, when he could not perform the fervent desire he had to serve

serve God among the faithful. How bitterly does he bemoan his being deprived of the comfort of the publick worship of God, during his exile, and the blasphemies of his enemies, which caused his spirit even to be overwhelmed? *As the Hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God.* Meaning in the House of the Lord, the Tabernacle where the solemn worship of God was celebrated, and the Ark of the Covenant was, where God dwelled, 2 Sam. 6. 2. or where the Lord gave visible signs of his presence. And mark what follows? *My tears (saith he) have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God?* His tears were as his bread, he fed and filled himself with tears, as if they were his onely food and sustenance, according to that in the 80. Psal. 5. *Thou feedest them with the bread of tears, and givest them tears to drink in great measure.* • Meaning his own people oftentimes, who are at his very foot, praying and supplicating at the throne of grace.

And such a frame of spirit shall be found also in them, as shall ask the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward; *They shall be going and weeping,* and in this spirit of mourning they shall go and seek the Lord their God. All which doth evidently shews forth, what will be the temper and spirit of all right-repenting souls, and what a frame of spirit the Lord expects his people to be found in, when his hand is lifted up, even in this time, when he sends the destroying Pestilence among us.

Now

Now consider in what frame of spirit art thou before the Lord this day ; Hast thou found thy heart broken as it were into shivers for thy sins ? Has the sight of thy sins made thee to sigh for thy sins, and to mourn kindly before the Lord for thine iniquities ? Hast thou ever shed a tear before the Lord for thy secret sins ? or thy more open and notorious abominations ? Surely, if in such a day as this, when the Arrows of the Lords Indignation are flying abroad, if thou shalt be found in a Carnal, Light, Frothly, Frolick, Voluptuous, Vain-spirit ; a lover of thy pleasures more then a lover of God, putting far away from thee the evil day, and causing the seat of violence to come near ; like those the Prophet *Amos* complains of, *Who were at ease in Sion, and trusted in the Mountain of Samaria, That lay upon Beds of Ivory, and stretcht themselves upon their Couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall, That did chaunt to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of Musick :* like *David, That drank wine in bowls, and anointed themselves with the chief oyntment, but were not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.* I say, if in such a day as this, under such a severe and sore visitation as this, thou shalt be found in such a spirit and temper as this, sad and deplorable will thy condition be:

For mark what the Lord threatned those carnal, fleshly, sensual rejoycing ones. Therefore now shall they go captive, with the first that go captive, and the banquet of them that stretchd themselves shall be removed, *Amos 6. 1. to the 8. vers.* So dangerous and highly provoking a sin, when the present dispensations of God, together with thine

own personal evils, do call for a mournful frame of spirit, that then thou shouldst be found in a spirit of carnal merriment and rejoycing. As the Lord complained by the Prophet *Isa. Chap. 22. 12.* *In that day did the Lord God of Hosts call to weeping and mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth; and behold joy, and gladness, slaying Oxen, and killing Sheep; eating flesh, and drinking wine: Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we shall dye.*

This they spake in a scoffing manner, as if they had said, our Prophet tells us, that we shall soon be destroyed, and slain, or carried into captivity; let us then be jovial and merry, as long as we may. But mark, how hainously did the Lord take it at their hands. *And it was revealed in mine ears by the Lord of Hosts, Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you, till ye dye, saith the Lord of Hosts.* Meaning that it should never be forgiven unto them, unless they did cease from sinning. For so the word *till*, or *untill*, in Scripture phrase does usually hold forth, *Gen. 28. 15. 2 Sam. 6. 23. Matth. 1. 25.*

I shall add hereunto that in the Prophet *Joel Chap. 2d.* where the Prophet setting forth the terrible-³ness of Gods approaching Judgements, in the 12th. vers. he exhorteth them to this repenting, and relenting frame of spirit, as the only means to pacifie the Lords wrath and indignation, from breaking out against them, or for the removal of it. Therefore also now, saith the Lord, *Turn ye even to me, with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping; and with mourning: and rent your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord*

your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. So in the 15. vers. Blow the Trumpet in Sion, sanctifie a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the people, sanctifie the Congregation, &c. Let the Priests, the Ministers of the Lord, weep between the Porch and the Altar; and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thy heritage to reproach. And mark what follows, Then will the Lord be jealous for his land, and pity his people.

This was that spirit also that was found in the people of Nineveh, when destruction was threatened upon *Jonah's* preaching, *Jonah* 3. 5, 6, 7, 8. It is said, they believed God, and proclaimed a Fast, and put on sackcloth from the greatest of them even to the least, yea, the King himself arose from his throne, and laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes; and caused it to be proclaimed, that man and beast should be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God, and turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that was in their hands: and (saith he) who can tell, if God will turn, and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger that we perish not? And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way, and God repented of the evil, that he had said, that he would do unto them, and he did it not.

See what signal demonstrations were there here, of the inward sorrow and compunction of their hearts. Oh how will this Example of *Nineveh* repenting and sorrowing for their sins, rise up in judgement against the men of this generation! *Luk.* 11, 32. Where is the covering of sackcloth to be seen?

Any

Any outward demonstrations of a relenting spirit to be discerned? Where can we see the mournful soul that is deeply afflicted for its sins, under this sore visitation of the Lord? Are not men and women as proud, and vain, and carnal, and jovial now as before? Is there any crying mightily unto God? Any turning from their evil way, or from the violence that is in their hands? Do we see any loosing of the bands of wickedness? undoing the heavy burdens? the letting the oppressed go free? and the breaking of every yoke? And where are any bowels of compassions drawn out toward the poor and needy? but in vain are all fastings, and formal devotions, if these things are neglected, which are essential as to that acceptable fast which God hath chosen, *Isa. 58. 6, 7.* See then that ye be true mourners in *Sion*, and let the sense of thine iniquities work in thee a true contrition, and brokenness of heart. *For the Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit, Psal. 38. 18.* This is the heart that he will heal, *Psal. 147. 3.* The heart that he will bind up, *Isa. 61. 1.* That Evangelical sacrifice which he will not despise, *Psal. 51. 17.*

Now to get thy heart melted into this mournful frame. Take these helps.

1. Be looking up unto Christ, whom by thy sins thou hast peirced, *Zach. 12. 10.*
2. Apply the New Covenant-promises, for the taking away of the stony heart out of thy flesh, and the Lords giving of thee an heart of flesh, *Ezek. 11. 19. and 36. 26.*
3. Get a sense of the unspeakable misery thou art in, by reason of thy sins, *Rom. 6. 23.*

whether it be Pride, Oppression, Idolatry, Adultery, Apostacy, Cursing, and Swearing, or such other of those pestilential sins before mentioned; or whether they be lies, railings, scoldings at Gods people, rotten speeches, bedlam passions, goods ill-gotten, time ill-spent, prophanation of the Lords-day.

4. Consider also, that thy heart hath been the Fountain, or rather the Sinck, from whence hath issued many foul streams; where all ill hath been forged, all evil words, and wicked thoughts ingendred, then by the rule of proportion let thy heart be a fountain of sorrow for sin.

5. Consider the heart of Christ, he had not taken a heart of flesh, but for sin; which for thy sake was filled with that unexpressible sorrow and greif, that if all the godly sorrow of all the righteous souls, from the beginning of the world to the end thereof, in heaven and in earth, dead or alive, were collected into one heart, they could not countervail the depth of his anguish. And shall his blessed soul fall asunder in his blessed breast, assaulted with all the wrath of God, and the most dreadful torments of Hell? shall his soul be like a scorched hearth, and so pressed with the flames of Gods revenging wrath, which wrung from him those bloody drops, and rusul crys. *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* And shall thy heart be as a stone within thy breast, and never be moved? Oh, prodigious hardness, and worse then heathenish ingratitude!

6. Consider if thy heart be not wounded here in this world, in some measure truly, it shall hereafter be filled with such endless horrors.

it would grieve and break ten thousand hearts to imagine or think of it. Is it not better then, to mourn a little here in this life for sin, then to have our hearts enlarged to endure to all eternity, the extremity of the wrath of God, in the unexpressible horror of hell? Is any man so senseless, to think he shall go to heaven in a bed of down, and never be touched for his sins? When *Hezekiah*, a man of a perfect heart, complained and chattered like a Crane, *Isa.* 38. 14. When *David* a man after Gods own heart, roared all the day long, *Psal.* 32. 3. When *Job* a perfect and a just man, complained that the Arrows of the Almighty were within him, and that the venome thereof did drink up his spirit, *Job* 6. 4. Nay when Christ himself, that holy and just one, that pure and immaculate Lamb, did so cry out, in the agony and bitterness of his spirit.

7. Consider again, that if thou getst this broken heart into thy breast, thou shalt bring down the glorious Majesty of Heaven, God Almighty with his Chair of State to sit in thy soul. For he hath a twofold habitation, to wit, heaven, and the humble heart, *Isa.* 57. 15.

8. Add hereunto the practise of the Saints of God. They poured out tears as men do water out of Buckets, *1 Sam.* 7. 6. *Mary Magdalen* washed Christs feet with her tears, *Luk.* 7. 14. The *Publican* strook on his breast, with a sorrowful acknowledgment of his sins, *Luk.* 18. 13. And surely, if thy hands and eyes, and tongue and heart, have been instruments of Gods dishonour; then by the Rule of proportion, thou shouldst have the works of thy hands, instrumental demonstrations of re-

Pentance. Thine eyes fountains of tears, and thy tongue uttering, and thy heart suffering greif. And if for outward losses and crosses, thou canst weep tears, as *David* for his Son *Abſalom*? and with what wringing of hands, tearing of hair, bitter crying, do many expreſs the inward, and intolerable ſorrow, and greif of their hearts? Then certainly the loſs of *Chriſt*, and of the favour of *God*, which is infinitely better then Husband, Wife, Child, or any the moſt deſireable thing in the world, how ſhould this break thy heart, and draw tears from thy ſoul?

Thus having got thy heart melted into this mournful frame, out of a deep ſence, and apprehenſion of thine own ſins. Then,

Secondly, Thou wilt come to mourn kindly, upon the account of the common ſins, and abominations of the times. As *David* in the 119. *Pſalm*. 136. verſ. *Rivers of waters* (ſaith he) *run down mine eyes, and why? becauſe, they keep not thy law.* Or as others read it. *Mine eyes gush out with rivers of waters, I weep and ſhed abundance of tears, even for the wicked ſake whom I pity; and eſpecially, for the law of God, which greiveth me to the heart to ſee violated and broken.* So the Prophet *Jeremy*, *Oh that my head* (ſaith he) *were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night, for the ſlain of the Daughter of my people. O that I had in the wilderneſs a lodging place of wayſaring men, that I might leave my people and go from them; Why? what is the matter good Jeremy of this ſo ſad and mournful a wiſh? and that thou wouldeſt leave thy people, and go from them? Why? there is cauſe and reaſon enough,*
might

might he say. *They be all Adulterers, an Assembly of treacherous men. And they bend their tongues like their bow for lies: but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth, for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the Lord, Jer. 9. 1, 2, 3.* So deeply was the soul of this good Prophet of the Lord affected and afflicted, upon the account of the publique National abominations, and defilements.

In like manner it is said of righteous and just Lot, that he was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked (meaning the Sodomites, among whom he lived.) *For that righteous man dwelling among them (saith the Text) in seeing, and hearing, vexed his righteous soul, from day to day, with their unlawful deeds, 2 Pet. 2. 7, 8.* He lived among abominable men, that cared neither for right nor reason, and this greived and tormented his righteous soul, as if it had been upon a rack, as the word implies. So it is said of our dear Lord, that he was greived for the hardness of their hearts, *Mark. 3. 5.* But to bring it more close to the present visitation of the Lord, and what a special preservative and antidote this gracious qualification of soul is for the keeping off, of this severe stroke of the Lord: Look into *Ezek. 9.* even the whole Chapter; there you shall find, *that the Man who was clothed with linnen, which had the Writers Inckbourn by his side, was commissioned from the Lord, to go through the midst of the City, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a Mark upon the Foreheads of the men that did sigh, and cry for all the abominations that were done in the midst thereof.* And after him follows the men, who had the slaughter weapons in their

G 4

hands,

hands, and they were to go through the City and smite, and slay utterly old and young, both Maids and little Children, and Women, but not to come near any man upon whom was the Mark. God had a remnant among this wicked and back-sliding generation, and they must be first marked, and these are described to be such, as did sigh and cry for all the abominations of the times, and all that time the iniquity of the House of *Israel* and *Judah* was exceeding great, the Land was full of blood, and the City full of perverseness, and what other their abominations were, the Chapter before doth evidently declare it.

In like manner when the Passover was to be instituted was the blood of the Lamb to be a token to the children of *Israel* upon the houses where they were; So that the Lord seeing the blood that was struck upon the door-posts did pass over them, and suffered not the Destroyer to come in and smite them, when he smote the land of *Egypt*. The Plague was not to come upon the *Israelites* to destroy them, *Exod.* 12. 12, 13, 22, 23. Well then, wilt thou be of the number of Gods marked ones, that the Destroying Angel may pass over thee, and the plague come not upon thee, when God is smiting the land, as now he is, by the destroying Pestilence: O see then that thy heart is brought into this holy frame, to sigh and mourn not only for thine own personal evils, but also for the crying sins and abominations of the times. But surely, if thou canst swim down with the stream of the times, and hear the holy and precious name of God dishonoured and blasphemed daily, his Spirit derided, his Saints and Ordinances villified

and

and defamed, his Messengers abused, and the way of Holiness reproached. Or if thou canst behold wickedness walking up and down with a bold, impudent forehead, and men and women of a filthy, impure, spotted conversation, and not shed one tear, nor sigh and mourn under such National abominations; surely it argues, that the grace of saving and sound Conversion and Repentance was never yet effectually wrought in thy soul; if so, thou canst not but mourn under the sense of sin, whether in thy self or in any other. The want of which temper and spirit, in the case of the Incestuous person, made the Apostle *Paul* to reprehend the Church of *Corinth*, telling them, that they were puffed up, and had not rather mourned, *that he that had done that deed, might be taken away from among them*, 1 Cor. 5. 1, 2. Well then if you would be Gods marked ones, see that you be *Sions* mourning ones, remembring what our dear Lord hath left on record, for the abundant satisfaction and refreshment of such sorrowful souls, *Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted*, Mat. 5. 4. It is taken generally for a mourning or sorrowing for sin, as it stands in opposition with a spirit of jollity and voluptuous living, Luk. 16. 19, 25. Such shall be comforted, they shall never miss of outward and inward comforts. *They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy*, Psal. 126. 5. Their sorrow shall be recompensed with gladness. For to this end was Christ anointed to his Office of Mediatorship; *That he might comfort all that mourn*, whether upon the account of sin on the miseries of *Sion*, To appoint unto them that mourn in *Sion*, to give unto them beauty for ashes; beautiful garments, goodly apparel,

apparel, instead of ashes, which they were wont to strew upon their heads, and sit in them when they mourned, as a testification of their excessive sorrow and grief, *Job* 1. 8. *Jonah*. 3. 6. *Mat.* 11. 21. The oyle of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; by which we are to understand, the beautiful, resplendent, refreshing gifts and graces of the spirit of God, *Heb.* 1. 9. *That they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord that he might be glorified, Isa.* 61. 2, 3. Oak-trees of righteousness, trees of the greatest strength and duration, by which is meant, that those that are ingrafted into Christ by faith; and such are all true mourners in *Sion*, they shall not only bring forth fruits of righteousness, but they shall also have firme, durable, and permanent consolation, and strength in Christ. *Everlasting joy shall be upon their heads, and sorrow, and mourning shall flee away, Isa.* 51. 11.

Secondly, If thy repentance be sincere, and sound, and such as will stand thee in stead in a calamitous day; It will then work in thee a true hatred, and abhorrency of all manner of evil. *Job* abhorred himself, and repented in dust and ashes, *Job* 42. 6. So in the 40. of *Job* and the 4. verse. Behold I am vile, what shall I answer thee; I will lay my hand upon my mouth. *Wo is me* (saith the Prophet *Isaiah*) for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, *Isa.* 6. 5. But to come more close, as to the present dispensation, and visitation of the Lord. In the 6th. of *Ezekiel*, The Lord having threatened the Pestilence among other his sore destroying Judgments, and how the slain should fall

in

in the midst of them, He promiseth nevertheless, that he will leave a remnant that should escape the Sword among the Nations. And how must this remnant be qualified? What thoughts and apprehensions shall they have of themselves, by reason of their abominable sins? See the 9. verse of that Chapter. *And they that escape of you (saith the Lord) shall remember me among the Nations, whither they shall be carried Captives; because, I am broken with their whorish heart, which hath departed from me; and with their eyes, which go a whoring after their Idols.* And what follows? *They shall loath themselves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations.* So in the 36. of Ezekiel, speaking of the restauration of Israel, how that he will take them from among the Heathen, and gather them out of all Countries, and bring them into their own Land, and save them from all their uncleanneses, in the 11. verse. *Then (saith he) shall ye remember your evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loath your selves in your own sight, for your iniquities, and for your abominations.* This shall be the temper and spirit of the Lords escaped remnant, they shall loath themselves in their own sight for their iniquities, or for all the evils that they have committed, as it is Ezek. 20. 43. They shall even abhor and detest themselves for their iniquities, which will appear so odious, filthy, and abominable in their sight. As the *Israelites* loathed the Manna in contempt, counting it base or vile, in comparison with other meats, Num. 25. 5. Or as *Job* loathed his own life, when his soul would chuse strangling and death rather than life, Job 7. 15, 16. This indignation or bitter hatred against sin, is made a fruit, or note of true repentance, 2 Cor. 7. 11. Now

Now soul, examine the soundness and sincerity of thy Repentance hereby. Did the sighs of thy sin, ever work in thee a hatred, and abhorrency in thy soul against sin? Did it ever make thee to abhor thy self in dust and ashes? to loath thy self in thine own sight? An impenitent person may refrain from sin, but a true converted, and penitent person will hate sin. An impenitent person, may forbear to swear; but a true convert, *feareth an oath*, Eccles. 9. 2. A wicked person, may abstain from some gross evils; but the godly person, *will abstain from all appearance of evil*, 1 Theff. 5. 22. A wicked person, may leave some evil; but the godly, *and such as love the Lord will hate evil*, Psal. 97. 10. A wicked person, may abandon some evil way; but the truly repenting person, *hateth every false way*, Psal. 119. 104. A wicked and an impenitent person, may refrain from telling a lye; but the godly and such as are truly converted, *will hate and abhor lying*, vers. 163. A wicked man, may perhaps check himself for his unclean thoughts; but the godly man, *hateth vain thoughts*, vers. 113. And as David in the case of a wicked person, so will the godly say upon the account of all and every sin. *Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? I hate them with a perfect hatred*, Psal. 139. 21, 22. Now to work this hatred, detestation, and aversion in thy will against sin: Take these helps.

Consider, First, What sin is in it self.

Secondly, How God is provoked with it.

Thirdly, How thou art hurt and prejudiced by it.

First, Consider then, what sin is in its self.

Sin in its self is fouler then any Fiend or Di-

vel

vel in Hell ; because, it made that so, as fire is hotter then water that is heated.

2ly. It is extreemly ill, nothing comes nearer it ; for take sin in the abstract , so its a greater ill then the damnation of a mans soul : For when two ills fight together, that which conquers must needs be the greater. Now when a man hath lain in Hell ten thousand years, he is as far from coming out as ever, for the eternal duration in Hell cannot expiate sin.

3ly. It is most infectious, and therefore compared to a Leprosie ; For the first sin that peeped into the world stained the beauty of it. No sooner was sin committed by *Adam*, but the Stars seemed impure in Gods sight : the creatures were all at variance, the earth full of Briars and Thorns, and all things subjected unto the Curse.

4ly. It is most filthy, and therefore compared to the most vile things that can be named, *To monstrous raggs* , *To the vomit of Dogs* ; and whereas no dirt or filthy thing, can stain a Sun-beam ; sin stains a more glorious creature, which is the soul of man.

5ly. It is of a hellish nature, that it draws out, and takes into it self, the wrath of God, being full of cursed consequences. 1. Privative, the loss of Gods favour, the blood of Christ, the guard of Angels, peace of Conscience ; then which, what can be more obnoxious ? 2. Positive, It brings all misery (spiritual, hardness of heart, blindness of mind, horror of conscience, despair, &c. with all temporal losses and crosses here, and hereafter eternal torments both of soul and body, in that lake which burneth with fire and brimstone forever more, *Rev. 21. 8.*

Secondly,

Secondly, Consider how God is provoked with it.

For 1. Each sin is the only object of Gods infinite hatred; what infinite of infinities of hatred hast thou then upon thy soul, with all thy sins, when each sin hath the infinite hatred of God upon it.

2. Each sin is against the Majesty of that dreadful God of Heaven and Earth, who can turn all things into Hell; nay, Heaven and Hell into nothing by his word. Now against this God thou sinnest; and what art thou but dust and ashes, a lump of filth, and of uncleanness, and all that is naught? And what is thy Life, but a Span, a Bubble, a Dream, a Shadow of a Dream, and shall such a thing offend such a dreadful and glorious Majesty.

3. Every sin strikes at the glory of Gods pure eye, which cannot look upon iniquity, *Hab. 1. 13.*

4. Sin is that which killed his Son, the least sin could not be pardoned, but by Christs carrying his heart blood to his Father, and offering it for sin.

5. Each sin is an offence to all his mercies. This aggravated the sin upon Ely, *1 Sam. 2. 29.* and upon David, *2 Sam. 12. 8, 9.* Mercy is the most eminent Attribute of God, and therefore the sin against it is the greater. With what aggravations then are our sins committed in the time of the Gospel?

Thirdly, Consider how thou art hurt and prejudiced by it. Each sin (I mean unrepented of) kills thy soul, which is better then all the world. It robs thee of abundance of joy and comfort, and will cause thee to walk heavily in the bitterness and

and anguish of thy soul perhaps all thy days; as *David* and *Hezekiah* did. And how dreadful was that example of *Francis Spira*, who after his backsliding lived a while in exquisite horror, and after died in despair? And know, that thine own conscience will one day accuse thee for every sin thou livest wilfully in, though now it seems hid unto thee, and thy conscience is more then a thousand witnesses. And for the sins which peradventure thou now livest in, and accountest but petty and venial, many poor souls are at this instant burning in hell fire. By all which thou mayst clearly see what misery and hurt does attend on thee continually for the same: And therefore when any bait of Satan, or old companions would allure thee to sin, take this *Dilemma*; Either I must repent, and then it will bring more sorrow, then the pleasure or profit did good, or, if I repent not, it will be then the damnation of my soul.

These few things, among many others, may, if seriously pondered upon, be an effectual means to work thy heart to this hatred and detestation of sin, and a loathing of thy self for the same, which as it will evidence the truth of thy repentance, so will it be an excellent preservative against the now pestilential destroying Sickness. Now when the sight and sence of thy sins hath wrought thy soul to a kindly mourning and sorrowing for the same before the Lord, and that for all kinds and sorts of sins, to wit,

1. The weaknesses, frailties and pollutions of thy nature, even thy proness and inclination to sin; for though these being unconsented unto are no actual sins, yet are they matter of true sorrow,
grief

grief and humiliation to a sincere Christian, that he is such a polluted and unclean creature, and so apt to fall into all sin, if he be not restrained and prevented by Gods grace.

2. For the sinful acts and habits of thy unregenerate life, with all the aggravations belonging to them.

3. The slips and relapses of thy most regenerate life, and the infinite frailties and infirmities that still adhere to it; And that thy soul is wrought also to a real hatred and detestation of all sin, so that now thou beginest to loath sin, as a thing not onely hurtful, but ugly and abominable; a foul and beastly thing, and that which is most contrary, not onely to the pure and unspotted essence and being of God, but also contrary to, and unbefitting the nature and excellency of a reasonable creature, as man is. Ifay when these gracious dispositions of soul, of grief and hatred for sin are wrought in thee, then wilt thou not be ashamed from a contrite and wounded heart, to make an humble confession and acknowledgement thereof before the face of Almighty God, our heavenly Father, begging pardon and forgiveness for them. Then wilt thou own thy self a vile sinner, who hast worthily deserved his wrath; then wilt thou make an enumeration of the particular sorts of thy sins, of which thou knowest thy self guilty: Then wilt thou aggravate those sins upon thy self, by all the circumstances and heightning accidents of them; comprizing all thy unknown and unconfest sins under some such penitentiary speech and expression as that of *Dauids, Who can tell how oft he offendeth? cleanse thou me from my secret faults*

faults, *Psal.* 19. 12. And as thou art to confess unto God, and give glory unto him, *Josh.* 7. 19. whom thou hast chiefly and principally offended; so art thou commanded also to confess unto men, *James* 5. 16. *Confess your faults one to another.* And that for these reasons.

1. That so we may be capable of one anothers prayers.

2. Because it may be our sins are such as have injured others, and then confession unto them, is the first degree towards reconciliation, *Matth.* 5. 24. Or if they be onely against God, yet the confession of them to the Lords faithful Ministers and Servants, will not be improper, but in some kind necessary to such as desire the absolution and forgiveness of them, *Jam.* 5. 15.

3. Because in sin there is the guilt and the corruption, the one to be pardoned the other cured. The first being confessed to God to obtain his pardon, ought also, if it have been offensive and scandalous to the Congregation, to be acknowledged to them, that, that expression of repentance may make satisfaction to them for the ill example, and avert and deter from sin, whom it had invited to it. And surely, the disclosing of the particular state of thy sinful sick soul, and advising with others, especially the Physicians of the soul, how and by what means a cure may be wrought; how a raging sin may be subdued, the occasions and temptations to it avoided, cannot but be very profitable, comfortable and advantageous, as to the prosperous constitution, and health of thy soul. The necessity of which confession and acknowledgement of sin will further appear, not onely from

the practise of David, Psal. 51. 3, 4. Psal. 32. 5. Ezra Chap. 9. 6, 7. Nehemiah Chap. 9. 32. Job 40. 3. Jer. 14. 7. Daniel 9. 4, 5. and other holy men in Scripture; but also from such expresse Texts of Scripture as these, *If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all our unrighteousness, 1 Job. 1. 9. I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid: I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin, Psal. 32. 5. So Prov. 28. 13. He that covereth his Sins shall not prosper, but who so confesseth, and forsaketh them, shall have mercy: And this leads me to the Third particular, as that which will evidence the soundness and sincerity of our Repentance.*

Thirdly: If thy Repentance be sound, there will be a willing forsaking and renunciation of all sin, an abjuring of all thy former evil ways, both of the sins themselves, and the occasions which were wont to bring thee to those sins, 1 Thess. 5. 22. For, all thy fear and trembling at the wrath of God to come for sin, thy sorrow for sin, thy hating and loathing of sin, will not make thy Contrition full and perfect, unless thy will also do his part, and resolve to forsake and leave it. For true Contrition or dying unto sin, is such a compunction of the heart for the same, as is joyned with a purpose, will, and resolution to leave and forsake it. *The gracious soul will hate every false way, Psal. 119. 104. and not tolerate or allow it self, in any known evil or bosome corruption whatsoever, Psal. 18. 23. It will not say, as Lot said of Zoar, Is it not a little one? Gen. 19. 20.*

as Naaman the Syrian, The Lord pardon thy Servant in this thing, when I bow down my self in the House of Rimmon, 2 King. 5. 18. It will not account any sin little, which will bring upon us the great wrath of so infinite a Majesty. It knows and believes, that the weight even of little sins, as it were small sands, will sinck the ship of our souls, as well as our greater and grosser sins. That small leaks in Ships, and small breeches in Walls being neglected, will endanger the loss both of Ships and Cities: And that such Tradesmen, as in their accompts regard not small sums, will quickly prove Bankrupts.

Disobedience, though in never so small matters, as in eating of an Apple, and gathering a few sticks on the Sabbath, looking into, and touching of the Ark, are yet in Gods account no small matters: For how severely hath he punished all these, then which what can we imagine slighter? But gracious souls know, that it is not the smallness of the thing, that lessens either our obedience or disobedience, but that it is Gods Commandment, that ties to obedience in lesser things as well as in greater, which Command of his is despised, as well in the breach of the lesser, as of the greater. I say then, the truly repenting soul, will not allow it self in any known sin, though accounted never so little, since the very least are committed against so great a God, and bring upon us so great a danger. It will not excuse, extenuate, mince, or hide sin as Adam, nor cast it off himself upon others shoulders, as Saul, 1 Sam. 15. 21. But it would willingly be divorced and separated both in spirit, conversation, and affection, from all and every the pollution,

lutions, and defilements of sin ; which if wilfully and willingly lived in, he knows will expose his soul to inevitable ruine and destruction.

Consider then, hath the wrath of God Almighty, and the everlasting wo denounced to all impenitent sinners made thee fear and tremble ? Have thy tremblings been seconded with a true and hearty sorrow for thy sins ? Hath thy sorrow been such as hath brought forth hate and loathing of sin, so that sin hath appeared ugly and abominable unto thee ? Hath there then followed an humble confession, and laying open of thy sins before God ? begging pardon and remission of them, with a desire to be rid of them, and a real purpose and resolution, to abandon them and forsake them ? This will evidence, that thy service of sin hath given up the ghost, and that thou hast a firme resolution of leading a new life, and returning unto the Lord with all thy heart ; which is the fourth and last particular to be insisted on, in this subject of sound Evangelical repentance. For what is Repentance indeed, in the true definition of it, but a change of the mind, or a coming to a mans self again, to a right understanding after a man hath erred ; consisting, in a turning of the whole heart from Satan and Sin unto God, that is, to serve God in newness of Life, because he that lives in sin, serves the Devil, and belongs to his jurisdiction.

This definition you shall find full and whole in our Saviours words to Saint Paul, when he appeared to him going to *Damascus*, Act. 26. 18. as Paul himself reporteth them ; namely, *That he would send him to the Gentiles, to open their eyes, and to turn them*

them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they might receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them that are sanctified; Which voice Paul theresaith, he was obedient unto and thereupon went and shewed first to the Jews, and then to the Gentiles, That they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance. So, that according to the definition, Repentance hath two parts, An Aversion or turning away from Satan and Sin, that is the first; then a Conversion or turning unto God by Newness of Life, that is the second part: but I proceed.

Fourthly, The last thing that will evidence the sincerity of that Repentance, which will be prevalent with the Lord, to avert his wrath, and quench the fire of his indignation that is broken out among us, is, a returning unto the Lord with all the heart, Jer. 3. 12. Return thou back-sliding Israel (saith the Lord) and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you, for I am merciful (saith the Lord) and I will not keep anger for ever. Onely acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed, and repent and turn your selves from all your transgressions (saith the Lord) so iniquity shall not be your ruine, Ezek. 18. 30. In the 2. of Joel, the Lord threatening the terribleness of his Judgements, in reference to his great Army, how that the Earth should quake before them, and the Heavens should remble, the Sun and Moon should be dark, and the Stars should withdraw their shining; In the 2. verse, the Lord exhorteth them to a thorough repentance, as the only means to stop the currant of this devouring and sweeping Judgment: There-

fore also now. (saith the Lord) turn ye even to me, with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning. And rent your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God; for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.

And this Exhortation is urged by divers Arguments,

1. By promise of temporal blessings, namely, plentiful fruits of the earth, even to the reparation of all their former losses, by the Famine, and removal of the Northren Army from them, *vers. 18. to 28.*

2. Of spiritual Evangelical priviledges, whereof those temporals were but an imperfect pledge, viz. plentiful pourings out of his spirit, and his gifts upon all flesh, Gentiles as well as Jews, *ver. 28, 29.* Salvation and deliverance of an elect remnant in his Church, after the Lord hath manifested, by dreadful signs, the terrour of his coming, *vers. 30, 31, 32.*

2ly. This Exhortation is urged, by threatening of destruction against all the oppressing enemies of the Church. These are the blessed fruits (among others) of that repentance, that is, a returning unto the Lord with all the heart. Suitable to which, is that of the Prophet Jeremy, *If thou wilt return, O Israel (saith the Lord) return unto me, and if thou wilt put away thine abominations out of my sight, then shalt thou not remove, Jer. 4. 1.* Then shalt thou not wander, thou shalt not go into exile. Which foregoing places do imply, that God is not pleased with shews, or flying thoughts, or loose purposes, or half a heart, but requires an upright

upright turning away from evil, and a thorough conversion to himself, and that which is good, and not to idols, or any other vanities whatsoever. There is a special place to this purpose, in *Deut.* 4. 29, 30. It speaks of the Lords scattering of them among the Nations, and how they should be left few in number among the Heathen, whither the Lord should lead them; *But if from thence* (saith the Lord, by his servant *Moses*) *thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart, and with all thy soul. When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn unto the Lord thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice. For the neglect whereof, see what a bitter complaint the Lord took up against Israel, Amos* 4. 6. *How he had given them cleanness of teeth, and want of bread in all places, and had sent among them the Pestilence after the manner of Egypt, and had overthrown some of them, as he overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and they were as a fire-brand pluckt out of the burning, yet did they not return unto the Lord. But mark what follows? Therefore, thus will I do unto thee O Israel, and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel. And what did he threaten he would do unto them, for their obstinacy and incorrigableness if they repented not? The 2. verse declares it. The Lord God hath sworn by his holiness, that lo, the days shall come upon you, that he will take you away with hooks and your posterity with fish-hooks. Whats the meaning of that? understand, that like as great fishes are pull'd and drawn up out of the Sea with hooks, so he would cause them to be pulled out of their Land by the*

enemy, how loath and unwilling soever they were to quit it. To prevent which, the Lord exhorts them that they would prepare to meet him with true conversion, as a special means to appease his wrath, and prevent their ruine. When *Ephraim* was turned, and had repented, how was the heart of the Lord taken with it? *Jer.* 31. 18, 19, 20. *Hos.* 11. 8, 9. O then what shall I say; what arguments shall I make use of to excite thee, O *England*, to a speedy return unto the Lord? surely, thou hast had many gracious invitations in the day of thy prosperity and peace; but thou wouldst not hearken thereunto: Many premonitions and forewarnings of this day that is now come upon thee by the mouthes of the Lords faithful Messengers and Servants.

And upon this account may it not be said of thee as is recorded and declared concerning the Lords merciful dealings with his own people, and City of *Jerusalem*, where he had placed his name and worship, notwithstanding their great and manifold provocations; Yet the Lord God of their Fathers sent to them by his Messengers, rising up betimes and sending, because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place. But (now how did they requite the Lord for all his kindness and long sufferance towards them?) they mocked the Messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his Prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy, 2 *Chron.* 36. 15, 16. no healing, no help, their sores were so putrified and festred, that they grew incurable. As the Lord by his Prophet *Isaiah* complained, chap. 1. verse 4, 6. *The whole head became sick, and the whole*
bears

heart faint: From the sole of the foot even unto the head (from the lowest to the highest, from the Beggar upon the dunghil, to the King upon the throne) there was no soundness in it, but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores, which could not be bound up, nor mollified with ointment. The whole body of the State and Nation was so universally corrupted and depraved, that the Lord calls them, *A sinful Nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers, children that were corrupters, and such as had forsaken the Lord, and provoked the holy one of Israel unto anger, and had gone backward.* And tells them further, that he was even weary with smiting and punishing of them; *Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more:* Yet see for all their great and greivous provoking sins, and that general depravation and corruption that was among all sorts, from the highest to the lowest of them, as the 21, 22, and 23 verses of that Chapter do clearly demonstrate the truth of it; How does the Lord notwithstanding invite them again to repentance, by gracious promises of pardon, and the bestowing of all good things upon them? *Wash ye, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do well, seek judgement, releive the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow;* intimating wherein they should manifest the sincerity of their repentance, and returning unto the Lord: And then mark what follows; *Come now let us reason together (saith the Lord) though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall*

eat the good of the land: But if ye refuse, and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword. O the great indulgence and forbearance of the Lord towards this so generally depraved, corrupted and unreformed a people! Which is further notably set forth in that of the third of Zephany; *Wo to her that is filthy and polluted, to the oppressing City, she obeyed not the voice: she received not correction, she trusted not in the Lord: She drew not near to her God. Her Princes within are roaring lions, her Judges are evening wolves, they gnaw not the bones till the morrow. Her Prophets are light and treacherous persons: Her Priests have polluted the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law. And what follows? I have cut off the Nations, their towers are desolate, I made their streets waste that none passeth by, their Cities are destroyed, so that there is no man, that there is no inhabitant. I said, Surely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive instruction; (thou wilt now be warned by my judgements upon the Nations round about thee) so their dwelling should not be cut off, howsoever I punished them, but they rose early, and corrupted all their doings.*

The filthy leprosie and contagion of sin had so overspread and infested the whole Nation, whereby she became now ripe for destruction. And therefore did the Lord wound her with the wound of an enemy, & with the chastisement of a cruel one, for the multitude of her iniquity, because her sins were increased, *Jer. 30. 14.* And now the wrath of the Lord breaks out, and it could not be appeased; For he brought upon ~~the~~ ^{the} King of the Chaldees, who slew their youngmen with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young

man or maiden, old man or him that stooped for age; he gave them all into his hand, 2 Chron. 36. 16, 17. They would not take example by the judgements of God which he executed upon the heathen round about them, and now God will make them the examples of his fierce indignation and wrath: *Patientia læsa fit furor.* His abused and worn out patience is now turned into implacable anger; His Spirit will not always strive, Gen. 6. 3. Jerusalem had her day, Luk. 19. 42. God would have gathered her, but she would not, and now her house is left unto her desolate, Matth. 23. 37, 38.

Wilt thou then, *IO England*, take a view of thy sins: and see whether they do not equal, if not overpass the sins of that Nation? Are not thy sins grown epidemical, and spread through the whole body? may it not be said of thee as of that Nation, that the whole Head is sick, and the whole Heart faint? Can the Throne plead an exemption from this universal contagion? Can the Prince or Peasant, the Nobility or Gentry, the Laick or Ecclesiastick? Have not all sorts and degrees of men and women deeply corrupted themselves, and turned aside from following the Lord? When did sin and transgression more abound then in this our age and generation? when did it walk up and down with a more impudent and brazen face? when did you ever see Pride to be prouder? Oppression more oppressive? Adultery more adulterous? Luxury more luxurious? Cruelty more cruel? Unrighteousness more unrighteous, and all manner of disobedience to God and his commands, more disobedient? When was Drunkenness and Prodigality, Swearing, Cursing and Blaspheming, Rant-

Ranting and Roaring, Atheism and Epicurism, more abounding? When was there a more profanation of Gods holy things? a greater pollution of his Sanctuary? more violence done to his law? a greater contempt of Godliness, under the form and outward appearance of it? when was their more scoffing at Holiness, and deriding the Spirit of God, and a more open opposition of the pure way and Worship of God, then now in our days? And was there ever a greater Apostacy and falling away from the Faith, even by such, who once did shine as stars in the firmament of the Churches Heaven, making shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, to preserve a little airy honour, and a temporary perishing estate? And how hath the treacherous dealers dealt treacherously? and the Brother betrayed and delivered up the brother to death, the Fathers the Children, and the children risen up against their Parents, and causing them to be put to death? according as was foretold by our dear Lord, *Matth. 10. 21.* And surely, we may take up the same doleful lamentation and complaint with the Prophet *Isaiah*, namely, *That truth is fallen in our streets, and equity cannot enter, yea truth faileth, and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey, Isa. 59. 14, 15.* Yea, hath not wickedness been established by a law? and will not that woe be the portion of some who have decreed unrighteous decrees, and write grievousness which they have prescribed; *To turn aside the needy from judgement, and to take away the right from the poor of Gods people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless? Isa. 10. 1, 2.*

And

And what shall I say to the generality of the late professing people of this generation, when Religion was in fashion, and the ready way and step to preferment? was it not made even a stalking Horse, by many to obtain their base sinister, most vile and unworthy ends? How furiously did many drive on *Jehu*-like, under the most specious and plausible pretences of piety, and doing great exploits for God; *Come see my zeal for the Lord*, breaking down the Images, and destroying the Worshippers of *Baal*, 2 *King*. 9. 20. and 10. 16, 19, 26. And all this, but to accomplish and bring about their own ambitious and vainglorious designs, the better to get up into the saddle, and that the Crown of all earthly glory might be set the faster and firmer upon their own heads? And when they had obtained that which their covetous and ambitious hearts, so eagerly hunted after, enriching themselves by the spoiling and impoverishing of others, what a requiem did they then sing unto their souls? what a lullaby to their earthly satisfactions and contentments?

How did they hug themselves in their great and large territories, and new obtained possessions? And now farewell Profession, Religion, and Conscience, but as it may be made serviceable to promote and maintain a carnal selfish interest and end. And it is lamentable to consider what a vain, secure, proud, formal, fashionable, temporizing, self-seeking, self-admiring, self-exalting spirit, did most Professors then grow into. O, the hatred, variance, emulations, seditions, the debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whif-

whisperings, swellings, tumults, grudgings, evil speakings, rash and uncharitable censurings, and most unchristian condemnings of one another, that was then found among them.

O the breakings and rendings, the separatings and dividings that sprang up from these roots of bitterness, whereby many sincere souls were troubled, and others thereby became greatly defiled. Surely, upon a serious and sad reflection hereon, it may be said as concerning the Divisions of *Reuben*, *Judg. 5. 15.* that for these things *there were great thoughts of heart*, great impressions upon the spirits of many that did truly and sincerely fear the Lord. Nay, what shall we say to those furious, blind, zealous, pharisaical spirits of those times, who did breath out threatnings, persecutions and slaughters even against the Disciples and servants of the Lord, because they could not conscientiously (and not factiously, as they termed it) conform to a publick Directory for worship, or submit to some unwarrantable and unscriptural impositions and injunctions, whereby many were cast into Prisons, their goods violently taken away, and themselves and families exposed to great misery, necessity and want? So little did appear, and (much to be lamented it is) so little does still appear of *that wisdom that is from above, that is pure and peaceable, and gentle and easie to be entreated*, *Jam. 3. 17.* So little of that spirit, whose fruit is demonstrable by its meekness, gentleness and goodness, *Gal. 5. 22.* So little of that charity that *suffereth long, and is kind, that envieth not, that vaunteth not it self (or is not rash) and puffed up*, *1 Cor. 13. 4.*

And

And, O that I could say, there was not the same spirit still, under several forms of profession, that is, lusting to pride, envy, censoriousness, separation, domination, and persecution. How violently do most men seek to advance, and set up their own opinion still? What a Babel, and confusion of languages are there still among us? Some crying, *Lo here*, others, *Lo there*. What force and compulsion is there still exercised upon Conscience, to beat men as it were into Religion, the certain Mark and Character of Antichrist, that Man of sin, who Satan-like, works with *all powers, signs, and lying wonders*, 2 Thess. 2. 9. Whereas *Religio docenda, non coercenda*, Religion is to be taught, and not to be forcedly thrust and imposed upon the Conscience. When the Scripture tells us, that *servent Charity should cover a multitude of sins*, 1 Pet. 4. 8. But alas, it is not large and long enough, to cover one sin or slip, or perhaps but an infirmity, or weakness in a Brother. When the Scripture tells us, *We ought to bear one anothers burthens, and so fulfil the law of Christ*, Gal. 6. 2. And that nothing should be done through strife, or vain-glory, but that in lowliness of mind, each should esteem others, better then themselves, Philip. 2. 3. When the Scripture tells us, That (as the Elect of God, &c.) we should put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, Col. 3. 12, 13. And that with all lowliness, and meekness, &c. we should endeavour to keep the unity of the spirit, in the bond of peace, Eph. 4. 2, 3.

When the Scripture tells us, That it is a *Diotrephes* spirit, to love to have the prebeminence in the

he Church, 3 Epist. Job. of 9. vers. that is, who out of ambition shall exalt himself above his fellow brethren, seeking to Lord it over them, and to draw all the respect to himself alone. Contrary to that of Peter, who forbids the Elders, to be Lords over Gods heritage, but to be Example to the flock, 2 Pet. 5. 3. And most disagreeable to the pattern and example of that blessed Apostle Paul himself, and other the faithful Ministers of Christ, who in his Epistle to the Church of *Corinths*, declareth, *That thee had not a dominion over their faith, but were helpers of their joy*, 2 Cor. 1. 24. And that the weapons of their warfare were not carnal, but mighty through God, 2 Cor. 10. 4. The weapons which they used, by the Gospel of Christ to convert men, and to bring them under the Kingdome and obedience of Christ, were not carnal, that is, such as natural, and worldly men are wont to make use of; either by eloquence or deceit, or by force to bring others in subjection under them; but mighty, or powerful through God, in moving and convincing of the hearts of men by his Spirit, *Ad. 16. 14.* Surely, if these things were seriously laid to heart, we must needs acknowledge that the sins of professing people, as well as others, have been highly provoking unto the Lord, as to the drawing down of this sore visitation of the Plague among us.

And this may put us to silence, that we murmur not, and will justify the righteousness of God in the way of his severity, as he now comes forth against many of his own people. For we have all sinned, and come short of the glory of God, *Rom. 3. 23.* And what says the Lord by the Prophet, *Amos. All the sinners of my people shall dye by the sword,*
which

which say, The evil shall not overtake nor prevent us.
Amos 9. 10. So the Lord by the Prophet *Jeremy* complains: For among my people are found wicked men: they lay waite, as he that setteth snares, they set a trap, they catch men. As a Cage is full of birds, so are their houses full of deceit: therefore they are become great, and waxen rich. They are waxen fat, they shine, they overpass the deeds of the wicked, they judge not the cause, the cause of the fatherless: yet they prosper: and the right of the needy do they not judge. And mark what follows? Shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord? shall not my soul be avenged on such a Nation as this, *Jer. 25. 26, 27, 28, 29.* And who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? Did not the Lord, he against whom we have sinned? for they would not walk in his ways, neither were they obedient unto his law. And consider well what follows. Therefore he hath poured upon him the fury of his anger, and the strength of battle, and it hath set him on fire round about, yet he knew not, and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart, *Jsa. 42. 24, 25.* So *Jeremy* the 12. 7. I have forsaken mine house, I have left mine heritage, I have given the dearly beloved of my soul into the hands of her enemies.

And what may we gather from all this? Surely thus much, That no near relations as to God, or any external priviledges, can yeild a protection, from a sin-deserved correction. Remember *Lots* wife, *Luk. 17. 32.* Vengeance closely waits on disobedience: Punishment doth dog impiety. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep, saith *Paul* to the Church of *Corinths*, speaking of eating and drinking unworthily at the

Lords Table, 1. Cor. 11. 29, 30. God is of pure eyes then to behold iniquity, with any approbation or tolleration as to his own peculiar people. *If his children forsake my law (speaking of David and his seed, as a Type of Christ and the true spiritual seed) and walk not in my judgments: If they break my Statutes, and keep not my Commandments: What then says the Lord? Then will I visit their transgression with a rod, and their iniquity with stripes,* Psal. 89. 30. The Lord hath laid righteousness to the rule, and weighed his justice in a balance; and his judgments are right, and in faithfulness he doth afflict, Psal. 119. 75. His sentence is past forth, and stands irrevocable: *Tribulation and anguish upon every soul that doth evil,* Rom. 2. 9. *If we sin we shall suffer. How? Aut a Deo vindicante, aut ab ipso homine penitente,* as one says excellent well; Either from God revenging, or themselves repenting. For he that repenteth himself of his sins, doth punish himself for his sins.

And now, O *England*, if thou repent not, let me say unto thee, as the Prophet *Isaiab* Chap. 10. 2. to the men of that generation. What wilt thou do now in the day of thy visitation, and in the desolation that shall come from far. To whom wilt thou flee for help? and where will ye leave your glory? O then bethink thy self yet, before it be too late, before the wrath of the Lord break out, so that their will be no remedy. O gather thy self together, O Nation not desistous, before the Decree bring forth, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon thee, before the whole Land be devoured by the fire of his jealousy, before he make a speedy riddance of all that dwell in the land:

As

As the Lord by the Prophet Zephaniah exhorts, Chap. 1. 18. Chap. 2. 1, 2. O then return unto the Lord thy God, for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Take unto you words, and turn unto the Lord, say unto him, take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously, Hosea 14. 1. Suitable to which is the Churches exhortation, Come, and let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up, Hosea 6. 1.

This is the way the Lord himself propounds for the removal of his sweeping devouring Judgments, Turn ye, even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning, and rent your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God, who knoweth if he will return, and repent, and leave a blessing behind him, Joel 2. 12, 13. Let the King lay his robe from him, and cover him with sackcloth, and sit in ashes; let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, let there be some demonstrative tokens of a more than ordinary sorrow and humiliation, for each and every ones so highly provoking sins. Let all cry mightily to God. yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands. Who can tell if God will turn, and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not? This will move Gods repeatings towards us, this will divert his wrath, Jonah 3. and the latter end, Jer. 31. 20. And that you may not question the truth and certainty of it in the least, will you consider, that the Lord stands engaged by his unalterable word and promise to make it good. If I shut up heaven (saith he) that there be no rain, &c. Or if I send pestilence among my people: if my people, which are
I 2 called

called by my name, shall humble themselves and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways. What then will he do? Then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land, 2 Chron. 7. 13, 14. Wherefore let this counsel be acceptable to all, which Daniel gave to King Nabuchadnezzar. O King break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor, if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity. Dan. 4. 27. As if he had said, If thou wilt follow the counsel that I give thee, then there is hope, that God will have mercy upon thee, and lengthen thy peace, rest, and prosperity. And if thou wilt break off thy sins by righteousness, then thou must not onely loose the bands of wickedness, but thou must undo the heavy burdens also, and let the oppressed go free, and break every yoke. Thou must deal thy bread to the hungry, and bring the poor that are cast out to thy house; when thou seest the naked, thou must cover him, and not hide thy self from thy own flesh, Isa. 58. 6, 7.

And surely, if this counsel be timously accepted, O people of England! O City of London! though thou hast trespassed greivously against the Lord, and broken the Covenant of thy God, and the hand of the Lord is gone out against thee, and death is come up into thy Windows, yea, even entred into thy Palaces, Jer. 9. 21. Yet know, that if thou humblest thy self and repentest, there is hope in Israel, concerning this thing, Ezra 10. 2. And O, that thou mayst know, even in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace, before they are hid from thine eyes.

And think not that your flying away can secure you, his hand knows how to find you out. *Whether canst thou go from his spirit, or whether canst thou flee from his presence, Psal. 139. 7. And know assuredly, that if thou art still an enemy, and a hater of God and goodness, his hand will find thee out, Psal. 21. 8. Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies, thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee. Thou shalt make them as a fiery Oven in the time of thine anger, the Lord shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them. And as Job saith, His eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings. There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves, Job 34. 21, 22. And though thou exalt thyself as the Eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord, Obad. vers. 4. And know whosoever thou art, though thou rustlest it in thy gallantry and pride, if yet thou puts far away from thee the evil day, and causelt the seat of violence to come near, that liest upon thy bed of Ivory, and stretches thyself upon thy Couch, and chaunts to the sound of the viol, and drinks wine in bowls, and anoint thyself with the cheif oyntments, but greivest not for the afflictions of Joseph, that the judgment of God will pursue thee at thy very heels. And if thou repentest not, but shalt still bless thy self in thy heart, saying, Thou shalt have peace, though thou walkest in the imaginations of thy own heart, to add drunkenness to thirst: The Lord will not spare thee, but then the anger of the Lord, and his jealousie shall smite against thee, and all the curses that are written in the Book of God, shall lye upon thee, and the Lord*

shall blot out thy name from under heaven, Deut. 29. 19, 20.

The Third Spiritual Receipt.

When in the conscionable use of the former means, thou findest that this bitter pill or potion of Repentance, hath begun to operate upon thy heart, so as to cause it to melt and mourn kindly before the Lord; then in the next place, take a good draught of Faith in the blood of Christ, and put therein also a good quantity of Beleif, in the power, faithfulness, and promises of God in Christ. This through the blessing of God, will make this bitter pill to work strongly and effectually, to the expelling of all those virulent, obnoxious, and malignant humours that are such great enemies to a healthful and sound constitution of soul and body, which if unexpelled, that they grow to some head and strength, they will have a very strong influence upon thy spirits, to contract this fore Pestilential distemper, to the endangering oftentimes of the loss, and ruine of the whole man, soul, and body to all eternity.

First, Then this Faith in the blood of Christ, rightly applyed unto thy soul, is and hath been always a very soveraign Receipt, and a precious Antidote to expell,

1. All the fiery assaults of Satan.
2. The venome and malignity of sin.

And therefore, among all the severall choise peices of our spiritual Armory, laid down in the 6th. of the *Ephesians*: This is recommended, as the most choise and principal peice among them all;

all; *Above all, taking the sheild of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.* Some translate it (*in all*) as if he had said, in all things whatsoever you do, see that you use the sheild of faith; (*to all*) as if he had said, to all other Graces add this; (*above all*) which is more emphatical, for hereby all the imperfections of the rest of the Armes are covered, and we are best defended against all the fiery darts, and assaults of Satan, that is, his poysonous darts: which by their venome inflame the soul. The Apostle alludes to the custome of old, in times of war, who by their darts shot fire; or else, when they dipped the heads of their arrows in poison, and shot them at their enemies, they even fired their flesh: To prevent which, it is said, that the Souldiers made them large sheilds of raw Neat-leather, which might cover the whole body, so that when the fiery venomous darts lighted upon them, they were presently quenched. All which agrees well with the nature of Satans temptations, which as poison and fire, do wound and pierce the soul, if they be not stopped and quenched by the sheild of faith, when they hit upon it.

So in the 1 Pet. 5. 8. The Apostle directs to the making use of this most excellent peice of a Christians armour of proof, speaking of our adversary the Devil, who as a roaring Lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour; This counsel he gives, *That we resist him stedfastly in the faith.* Resist the Devil (saith James) and he will flee from you, Jam. 4. 7. Resist him, when he tempteth and enticeth thee to fullfil thy fleshly lusts, and to seek after the freindship of the world. And he will

flee from thee, he will run away ; if thou withstand him, oppose him, and set thy self, as it were, in battle array against him ; thou wilt find him as very a coward, as ever any that handled a weapon ; thou wilt make him run away presently.

But that you may resist him and foil him, you must be sure to resist him, and that stedfastly in the faith ; if you make use of this weapon, he will never be able to encounter with you : Faith will foil him. By this weapon, the Saints always overcame him, *Rev. 12. 11. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb.* And how by the blood of the Lamb ? Satan will tell thee, thou art a vile, filthy, polluted, and abominable wretch ; a great and hainous sinner : but faith in the blood of Christ will tell him, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners ; yea, the greatest and chiefest of sinners, *1 Tim. 1. 15. And that God hath set him forth to be a Propitiation through faith in his blood for the remission of sins, Rom. 3. 25.* And though thou art naturally unclean, and hast contracted much detilement by reason of sin ; yet that Christ hath loved thee, and washed thee from thy sins in his own blood, *Rev. 1. 5. That in him thou hast redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, Col. 1. 14.*

Satan will tell thee, thou hast broken the Law, and incurred Gods anger, wrath, hell, and eternal damnation : Faith will tell him, that Christ hath perfectly fulfilled the Law, satisfied divine justice ; taken away the curse, and freed thee from condemnation, *Rom. 8. 1.* and that Jesus Christ by his blood hath pacified Gods anger towards thee, *Rom. 3. 25.* Faith will tell him, thou art not under

der

der the Law now, and so not under the Curse; and that though the Law does pronounce thee accursed for the breach of it, yet Christ hath redeemed thee from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us, *Gal. 3. 10, 13*. Satan will tell thee still thou art unrighteous, and the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God; but faith will tell him, that thou art washed, that thou art sanctified, that thou art justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of God, *1 Cor. 6. 11*. And that Christ was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, *2 Cor. 5. 21*. And as he was made sin, so of God also is he made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption. Does Satan tempt thee to evil? Faith will tell him, that he so tempted Christ, but Christ vanquished him in all his temptations, *Mat. 4*. And we are more then Conquerors through Christ that hath loved us, *Rom. 8. 37*. Does he yet tempt thee to be proud? tell him, that God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble, *1 Pet. 5. 5*. Does he tempt thee to passion? tell him, that the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God, *Jam. 1. 20*. Does he tempt thee to uncleanness? tell him, thy body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and thou art not thine one, but art bought with a price, and therefore thou must glorifie God in thy body, and in thy spirit which is Gods, *1 Cor. 6. 19, 20*.

Does he tempt thee to be a servant of men? tell him thou art bought with a price, and so freed from that servitude, *1 Cor. 7. 23*. would he have thee to please men? tell him, if yet thou shouldst please

please men, thou shouldst not be the servant of Christ, *Gal. 1. 10.* Does he tempt thee to the love of the world? tell him, that if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him, *1 Joh. 2. 15.* Does he tempt thee to an indifferent, lukewarm spirit in the things of God? tell him, that the Lord testifies against such a spirit, that is neither hot nor cold, that he will spue it out of his mouth, *Rev 3. 16.* Does he tempt thee to fall away, draw back and renounce thy profession; tell him, that such as so fall away, shall not be renewed again unto repentance, *Seeing they crucified themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame, Heb. 6. 6.* And that if any man draws back, the Lord will have no pleasure in him, *Heb. 10. 38.* You see what a most excellent weapon this shield of Faith is to repel the temptations and assaults of Satan upon all accounts.

Secondly, And it is of like force and efficacy to expel the venome and malignity of sin. Art thou stung with it at any time; look up by faith unto the brazen Serpent, there's healing, *Numb. 21. 9.* Are thy sins of a scarlet dye? Faith in his blood can make them as white as snow; are they red like crimson? it will make them as wool, *Isa. 1. 18.* Are they many and multiplied transgressions? Faith will tell thee, that where sin hath abounded, there grace hath much more abounded; that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord, *Rom. 5. 20, 21.* Hast thou abundantly sinned? this faith will tell thee, that God will abundantly pardon (he will multiply pardons, *Isa. 55. 7.*) Dost thou fear the reigning, domineering power

power of sin? This faith will assure thee, That sin shall not have dominion over thee, for that thou art not under the law, but under grace, *Rom. 6. 14.* Dost thou yet fear that thy sins shall stand on the file, and that God will remember thine iniquity? this faith in Christs blood will assure thee, that he will blot out thy transgressions for his own namesake, and will not remember thy sins, *Isa. 43. 25.*

But perhaps thou art afraid of Death, and of the power of the Grave; this Faith will assure thee, that death is swallowed up in victory; his sting taken out, that Christ hath ransomed thee from the power of the grave, and hath redeemed thee from death, that he is deaths plague, and the graves destruction, *Isa. 25. 8. Hos. 13. 14. 1 Cor. 15. 54.* So that we may triumphantly say, *Who shall lay anything to the charge of Gods elect? it is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay the gracious believing souls may be perswaded, that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate them from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus their Lord, *Rom. 8.* and some of the last verses thereof. Wilt thou not then fear this severe stroke of Gods visitation. O get more of the blood of sprinkling on thy soul, this speaketh better things then the blood of *Abel.* The blood of the Paschal Lamb was to be strook*

on the two side posts, and on the upper doorpost of the houses of the children of *Israel*, when God did intend to smite the first-born in the land of *Egypt*, and execute his judgement against all the *Egyptian* gods, and saith the Lord, *When I see the blood I will pass over you*, meaning the children of *Israel*, and the Plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the Land of *Egypt*. What did this typifie and hold forth, but Christ the true Passover or Paschal Lamb, whole blood besprinkling the conscience, cleanseth us from all sin, and delivereth us from the stroke of the destroying Angel, even from wrath to come, 1 *John* 1. 7. 1 *Thess.* 1. 10.

See then that thou exercise thy self continually in that onely heaven upon earth, and sweetest sanctuary to a hunted, troubled and afflicted soul, *The life of Faith*, in reference to thy *Salvation, Sanctification and Preservation*. As to thy *Salvation*; Let the truly-humbled soul, grieved and groaning under the heavy weight and burden of sin, throw it self into the meritorious and merciful arms of *Jesus Christ*, wounded, broken and bleeding upon the Cross, and there let it hold and hide it self for ever, in full assurance of eternal life, by vertue of that promise, *Job*. 3. 36. *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.*

2. As to thy *Sanctification*; If thou keep thy *Faith*, the fountain, root and heart, as it were, from which all thine other Graces spring, in life and vigour, thou wilt pray more comfortably, be more courageously patient, hear the Word more faithfully, receive Christs Ordinance of Breaking bread more joyfully, spend the Lords day more delight-

delightfully, confer more chearfully, meditate more heavenly, and walk in all the ways of new obedience, with more strength and conquest over corruptions. For ordinarily every one shall find the exercise of other graces, to be comfortable or cold, according to the liveliness, or languishing of his faith.

3. As to thy *Preservation* both temporal and spiritual; in crosses, afflictions, and all Gods outward angry visitation, let thy Faith be exercised in the power of such Promises as the, *Psa.* 89. 33. and 50. 15. *Heb.* 12. 6, 7, 8, 11. *1 Thes.* 3. 3. *1 Tim.* 2. 11. *Act.* 14. 22. *Luk.* 2. 23. *Isa.* 63. 9.

Secondly, A& Faith in the power, ability, all-sufficiency, and omnipotency of God. Power can do much, but omnipotency can do all, and is above all. He is able to do whatsoever he pleaseth, *Psa.* 115. 3. *He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength; who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered?* *Job.* 9. 4. The Angels which excel in strength are at his command, *Psa.* 104. 4. and subject unto Christ, *1 Pet.* 3. 22. *The Devils apprehending the power of God, do tremble,* *Jam.* 2. 19. All the power that men and devils have, it is given them from above, *Joh.* 19. 11. And for other creatures, he saith to the deep be dry, *Isa.* 44. 27. He commands the earth and it opens her mouth, *Num.* 16. 30, 31. The consideration of whose mighty power, made the Psalmist thus to break forth; *O Lord God of Hosts, who is a strong Lord, like unto thee, or to thy faithfulness round about thee? Thou rulest the raging of the Sea, when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them; thou hast broken Rahab in peices, as one that*
is

is slain, thou hast scattered thine enemies with thy strong arm; Thou hast a mighty arm, strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand, Psa. 89. 8, 9, 10, 13. At his wrath the ear'h shall tremble, and the Nations shall not be able to abide his indignation, Jer. 10. 10.

Beware then how we call into question the power and all-sufficiency of God; How we speak against God; This was the sin of the Israelites, and it was highly provoking unto the Lord. Its said they spake against God and said, *Can God furnish a Table in the Wilderness? Behold he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed, can he give bread also? can he provide flesh for his people? therefore the Lord heard this, and was wrath,* Psa. 88. 19, 20, 21. Moses also, he falls expostulating the case with God. *The people amongst whom I am (saith he) are six hundred thousand footmen, and thou hast said, I will give them flesh, that they may eat a whole moneth; Shall the Flocks and the Herds be slain for them, to suffice them? or shall all the Fish of the Sea be gathered together for them, to suffice them? And what Argument does the Lord use to convince Moses of his carnal, if not incredulous reasonings, But this, Is the Lords hand waxed short? thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass unto thee or not,* Numb. 11. 21, 22, 23. *And the Lord rained flesh upon them as dust, and feathered Fowles like as the sand of the Sea, though it was given as a great judgement unto them,* Psa. 88. 27. The same Argument does the Lord make use of, when he falls a reasoning with his people the Jews, upon the account of their dereliction or rejecti.

rejection, and that they might yet have sound ground of hope still of their restauration, though they had sold themselves for their iniquities, and could not produce any Bill of Divorcement of the Lords putting of them away, in *Isa. 50. 2. Is my hand shortned at all, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver? Behold, at my rebuke I dry up the Sea: I make the Rivers a Wilderness; their Fish stincketh because there is no water, and dieth for thirst. I cloath the Heavens with blackness, and I make sack-cloth their covering: So Isa. 59. 1. Behold the Lords hand is not shortned, that it cannot save, neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear; Which may be an excellent support to our faith. Let thy Faith then be exercised in the mighty power of God, in these following particular cases and seasons.*

1. In times of great difficulties and streights.
2. In times of sore sicknesses.
3. In times of great sinning.
4. In times of Worshipping and Serving the Lord.

5. In times of great suffering for the Lord.

1. In times of great difficulties and streights; Know that the same Almighty power, who could smite the Rock, and cause the waters to gush out, and the streams to overflow, can furnish a table in the Wilderness, can give bread, and provide flesh for his people. Take heed now of such irrational, absurd, and preposterous reasonings; The Lord smote the Rock, and gave water in abundance, but can he now furnish a table in the Wilderness? I remember the time when I was in great streights, for bodily and soul refresh-

refreshments ; and the Lord smote the Rock in a strange, miraculous, and unexpected way, and the Waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed ; I had comfortable supplies for soul and body, and that in a plentiful manner. But can he now help me in my streights, and supply my necessities ? now all conduit pipes are cut off, and all visible means of supplies and supports are taken away, Taxes are multiplied and increased, our Trade is gone, the Gentry gone, and such as gave life and being thereunto, have laid aside, and betook themselves to a retired-life ; many gone beyond the Seas, because they could not follow their callings, and be suffered to enjoy the freedom of their consciences too ; God hath smitten some of my dear friends or relations, who were instruments in his hand of my comfortable sustentation and supportation, and now, my Wife, and Children, begin to stare me in the face, to sob and sigh, and I have not wherewith to relieve them ; The sight and thoughts of these things do even break my heart, and wound my very bowels within me ; what shall I do ? what course shall I take for a livelihood ? Methinks I hear such doleful complaints among thousands distressed Families in the City at this time. Is it not a time and season then to be acting faith in the mighty power and providence of God ? Surely it is an easie matter to trust God, when we have Meal in the Barrel, and Oyl in the Cuse, and Money in our Purse ; but wilt thou trust God, and rely upon his power, in the want and absence of all ; As the Prophet *Habakkuk*, when the Fig-tree did not blossom, nor fruit could

be found in the Vines, when the labour of the Olive did fail, and the Field did yeild no meat, when the Flocks were cut off from the fold, and there were no Herd in the stall, when there was an utter consumption and deprivation of all things; then to be rejoycing in the Lord, and joying in the God of our salvation. Then to say, the Lord is my strength, and he will make me to walk on my high places. Then to say, the Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want; as *David*, and though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me, *Psal.* 22. then to live beleivingly, trustingly, and dependingly upon God.

This is a high Act of Faith in the Power of God. And O that I could minister a word of support unto thy soul in such a condition: Well, be not faithless, but beleiving; live still in the faith of the all-sufficiency of God: That his hand is not shortned, that it cannot help; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear; there's no diminution of his power, or is there any unwillingness in God to hear and help in a time of need: *Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil (saith the Psalmist) when the iniquity of my heels shall compass me about; Psal.* 49. 5.

So say thou, thou poor, doubting, and disponding soul. Why should I fear in this evil day? why should I distrust that God, and doubt of his power and all-sufficiency to help me now, who hath fed me, and cloathed me, and sustained me all the days of my life? Why should I not be casting my care upon him, who hath not only promised,

K

but

but is able also to take care of me? *1 Pet. 5. 7* Why do I not cast my burden upon the Lord, who hath graciously promised (and he is able also) : *Sustain me, and will never suffer the righteous to be moved? Psal. 55. 22.* This was a great stay and support to *Abrahams* faith, when God promised to make him a Father of many Nations; He considered not the deadness of his own body, being about 100. years old, nor the deadness of *Sarai's* womb. He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith giving glory to God; and being fully perswaded, that what he had promised, he was able also to perform. *Mark* I pray you, he did not only believe the promise, but the ability of God also, he fixt his faith in the power and all-sufficiency of God, *Rom. 4. 19, 20. 21.* He was assured, that God was as able, as he was faithful in the performance of his promise. God had said unto him, but a little before, *Abram. I am the Almighty God, walk before me, and be thou perfect;* and now *Abram* would not question it in the least, he knew his grace was all-sufficient for him, and that his strength could be perfected in his weakness.

As the Lord told *Paul* in another case, *2 Cor. 12. 9.* And has left it for ever upon record, as a most precious cordial of comfort, to refresh and support the most fainty, distressed, and disconsolate soul: To wit, *When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will bear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them;* And that they may not think he wants power to perform what he hath promised (saith he) *I will open rivers in high places,*

and fountains in the midst of the valleys : I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water, Isa. 41. 17, 18, 19.

Surely, this promise is very applicable to poor, needy, thirsty, hungry souls, upon the account of temporal or spiritual refreshment. And the Saints have beleived it : *Though I walk* (saith David) *in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me, thou wilt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me,* Psal. 138.

7. *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, (though I should be in the most dark, dismal and uncomfortable condition) yet I will fear no evil, thou art with me, thy presence shall support me, thy rod, and thy staffe, they shall comfort me,* Psal. 23. 4. *Though he slay me (saith Job) yet will I trust in him : I will maintain mine own ways before him. He also shall be my salvation,* Job. 13. 15.

So when the enemies of God are high, and the Church of Christ very low. O this acting of faith in the power of God is of great use. O God, how long shall the adversary reproach, shall the enemy blaspheme thy name for ever ? *Why withdrawest thou thy hand, even thy right hand (and thats the hand of power and strength surely) pluck it out of thy bosome. For God is my King of old (consider I pray you) working salvation in the midst of the earth. Thou didst divide the Sea by thy strength : thou brakest the heads of the Dragons in the waters. Thou brakest the heads of Leviathan in peices, and gavest him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness. Thou didst cleane the fountain and the flood : thou driedst up mighty rivers,* Psal. 74. 10, 11, 12,

13, 14, 15. What cannot the Lord do, when I hath a purpose to save his people, and to destroy his enemies? Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary who is so great a god as our God? Thou art the God that doest wonders: thou hast declared thy strength among the people. Thou hast with thine arm redeemed thy people, the Sons of Jacob and Joseph, Psa 77. 13, 14, 15. Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoyce in thee, Psa 85. 6. This raise up the Churches hopes, in the stormy and tempestuous times of persecution; and why? The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty. The Lord clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself, &c. The floods have lifted up, O Lord the floods have lifted up their voice: the floods lift up their waves. What then? The Lord is high is mightier then the noise of many waters yea, then the mighty waves of the Sea. And said Jethro, when Moses had told him what the Lord had done unto Pharaoh, and to the Egyptians for Israels sake, and all the travel that had come upon them by the way, and how the Lord delivered them. Now I know (saith he) that the Lord is greater then all gods: for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly, he was above them.

This is the Churches comfort, that though their enemies are high, and proud, and impetuous, yet the Lord is above them, Exod. 18. 8, 11. This was the Argument that good King Jehosaphat used in prayer with the Lord, when a great multitude of enemies came against him. O Lord God of our fathers, art not thou God in heaven and rulest not thou over all the Kingdomes of the

Heathen

Heathen ; and in thine hand is there not power and might , so that none is able to withstand thee ? Art not thou our God , who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel , and gavest it to the seed of Abraham thy freind for ever ? O our God , wilt not thou judge them ? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us : neither know we what to do , but our eyes are upon thee . And the Lord did thereupon shew forth his mighty power , and that this great multitude was not able to withstand him . For he set ambushments against the Child en of Ammon , Moab , and Mount Seir , that came against Judah , and they were smitten , and every one afterwards helped to destroy another , 2 Chron. 20 .

O then be acting faith , in this great and powerful *Jehovah* , that he would make bare his holy arm , in the eyes of all the Nations ; that all the ends of the earth , may see the salvation of our God , Isa. 52. 10 . Fear and tremble before him , whose mighty power hath limited , and founded the proud and imperious waves of the sea ; that hitherto shall they come and no further , and here shall its proud waves be stayed , *Jeremiah* 5. 22 . comp. with *Job* 37. 11 . Fear him , that can cast both body and soul into hell , *Matth.* 10. 28 . It is he that makes the pillars of heaven to tremble , and to be astonished at his reproof , *Job* 26. 11 .

And learn to depend on this Almighty being for reservation in all streights and exigents whatsoever , who can preserve without means , as *Eli* , ah , forty days and forty nights , 1 King. 19. 8 . by strange and miraculous means , even by the help

of Ravens that fed him, *1 King. 17. 4.* by the ministry of Angels, *vers. the 5. and the 6.* of that *1 King. 19. Chap.* By small means, as the widow's meal in the barrel, and her little oyle in her cruse, *2 King. 17. 14.* Against means, as *Daniel* in the Lions den, *Dan. 6. 22.* By ordinary means, where in his powerful blessing is to be desired; else, we may eat, and not be satisfied, *Hag. 1. 6.* And let us praise him withal our strength for his almighty power, *Rev. 4. 11.* *Worthy art thou, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power. Thine O Lord is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, 1 Chron. 29. 11.* And let us be speaking of his power, to make known to the Sons of men, his mighty acts, and the glorious Majesty of his Kingdom. *Whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and whose dominion endureth throughout all generations.* And for the adversaries of the Lord, let them know, that they shall be broken to peices, and that out of heaven God shall thunder upon them, *1 Sam. 2. 10.* And that his power, and his wrath is against all them that do evil, *Ezra 8. 22.* And let it be matter of consolation and encouragement in our prayers, that we call on that God, who is able to do exceedingly abundantly, above all that we ask or think, *Eph. 3. 20.* In our perseverance; That the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth who fainteth not, neither is weary, will renew our strength, that we shall run and not be weary, and walk, and not faint, *Isa. 40. 31.* Because he upholds us in our integrity, *Psal. 41. 12.* The Garrison that keeps us, is the power of God, *1 Pet. 1. 5.* And none can take us out of his hand, because he is greater then all, *Job. 10. 29.*

In times of *Temptation*, For our strength is in the Lord, and in the power of his might, *Eph. 6. 10.* 'tis he that strengthens us in the inward man. And when God shall help us with a little help, *Dan. 11. 34.* then our strongest temptations shall not prevail, but we shall be more then conquerors, through him that loved us, *Rom. 8. 37.*

In times of *Affliction*, Know that he that is Almighty orders them for the kind, whether on our souls or bodies, names or estates, *Amos 3. 6.* For the measure, whether great or small, *Jer. 30. 11.* The time, sometimes but an evening; heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the mourning, *Psal. 30. 6.* Sometimes ten days, The Devil shall cast some of you into prison, and ye shall have tribulation ten days, *Rev. 2. 10.* Sometimes our sorrows shall be for years, *Psal. 90. 15.* Make us glad, according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil.

He orders the *Deliverance*; there is an appointed time for that also. *Josephs* feet must be hurt with fetters, and lye in irons, until the time that the word of the Lord came and tried him, and then the King sends and looseth him, and makes him Lord of his house, and Ruler of all his substance, *Psal. 105. 19, 20, 21.* There is a time when the Prisoners shall be loosed out of their pit, and turn to their strong hold, even the Prisoners of hope, *Zach. 9. 10, 11.*

Lastly, what great consolation doth this minister in respect of death; our bodies shall not always rot and consume; we must awake and sing, though we dwell in the dust, *Isa. 26. 19.* And our

vile bodies shall be chaanzed and fashioned like unto his glorious body (even by the mighty and absolute power of Christ) according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself; Phil. 3. 21. All created powers being derived from him, and subordinate unto him, 1 Chron. 29. 12. and 2 Chron. 14. 11.

2. A faith in the mighty power of God, and that in times of sickness, and of this sore visitation of the Lord. Know that this is the Lords prerogative royal, to kill and to make alive, to bring down to the grave and to bring up again, 1 Sam. 2. 6. This the Lord challengeth, as his own sovereign, peculiar right, I, even I, am he, and there is no God with me; I kill and I make alive, I wound and I heal; neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand, Deut. 32. 39. In Psal. 90. 1, 2, 3. Saith the Church there, Lord thou hast bin our dwelling place in all generations, Before the mountains were brought forth, &c. even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. And what follows? Thou turnest man to destruction, and sayst, Return ye children of men. The consideration of this mighty power and the Churches acting faith in the same, did put her upon pious thoughts of returning unto the Lord; Come, and let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. And what follows? After two days will he revive us, in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight, Hos. 6. 1, 2.

Consider then in the first place, whoever thou art, that art thus under the chastising hand of God, that affliction commeth not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground, yet man

is born unto trouble, as the sparks flye upward, *Job* 5. 6, 7. But if sores and sickness comes not forth of the dust, from whence come they then? Surely, from the powerful immediate overruling hand of God. So said *Eliphaz*, *Job* 17. Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty: For, he maketh sore and bindeth up, he woundeth and his hands make whole. So *Job* himself acknowledged, ch. 19. 21. Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me. So *David*, Thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore, *Psal.* 38. 2. And consider, that as a sparrow falls not to the ground without Gods providence, so the Plague and Pestilence, and all other Sicknesses and diseases are guided by his own immediate hand, and he onely doth smite when and whom he pleaseth; and know, that the same Powerful hand that took away thy health, can in a moment take away thy breath, and then thou diest and returnest unto thy dust, *Psal.* 104. 29. This should make thee lye down patiently at the foot of God, and with all willing and chearful resignation of spirit, with good old *Ely*, say, It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good, *1 Sam.* 3. 18. And with *Job*, Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil, *Job* 2. 10. But whatever affliction he layeth upon thy loins, or what strokes soever upon any of thy dearest relations, see that thou murmur not, nor charge the Lord foolishly or unjustly; say not with the King of Israel, Behold, this evil is of the Lord, what should I wait for the Lord any longer? *2 King.* 6. ult.

2ly. Let the sence of the mighty hand of God which is upon thee, humble thee deeply ; So says *Peter, Humble your selves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time, 1 Pet. 5. 6.* This will evidence it self inwardly in a sight and sence of thine own great unworthiness, in an abhorring thy self in dust and ashes, and loathing thy self for all thy abominations, in a tender sence of temptations either in thy self or others, in a hatred of Hypocrisie, a willingness to suffer affliction, and a contentation in some measure to the will of God, in what estate soever it shall please God to bring thee to. Outwardly towards God, it will keep thee lowly in the use of means, and in a continual fear and awfulness of Gods presence, not caring to be counted vile for the service of God. And in carriage towards men, it is such a grace as is not affected in words or gestures, nor is it censorious, arrogant or contentious, but makes a man go before in giving honour, and not to think much to equal himself with them of the lower sort. This is the time now to be narrowly searching into thine own heart and mourn under it, and bewailing now thy want of love unto the Lord, and thy abounding love to sin ; do thou cover with sorrowing, what breach thou hast made with sinning ; and remember, *That had thy sin never been so sweet, then thy sorrow had never been so bitter.* And know that God is now awaking thee from all thy secure sleeps, that every minutes breathing he lends thee more, may be spent in preparing to meet Jesus Christ at the Judgement of the great Day ; which that thou mayst effectually do with all thy might, with fear and trembling, as before the Lord

Lord, remember that the next step (from this life) thou takest is into eternity.

3ly. Thus waiting till thy change come, Be further in the exercise of Faith in the power of thy mighty Redeemer, as to a glorious resurrection of thy body, when laid asleep in the grave; *Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up thee also by Jesus, 2 Cor. 4. 14. and then this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and then this mortal shall put on immortality, and death shall be swallowed up in victory, 1 Cor. 15. 53, 54.*

3. Act Faith in the mighty power of God in times of great sinning, and prophanation of the name of God: So *Jeremy* speaking of the customs of the people that they are vain, and of their Idol-gods, that they are altogether brutish and foolish; and the stock is a doctrine of vanities; he sets the great and mighty *Jehovah* against all their Heathenish gods; *Forasmuch as there is none like unto thee, O Lord, thou art great, and thy name is great in might. Who would not fear thee, O King of Nations? Jer. 10. 6, 7.* So in the 10. verse. *But the Lord is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting King: At his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the Nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.*

So the Prophet *Habakkuk*, he sets Faith on work in the mighty power of God, in a time of great sinning, and of treacherous and cruel dealing. *Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One? we shall not dye: O Lord thou hast ordained them for judgement, and O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction. Thou art of purer eyes then to behold evil, and canst not*

look

look on iniquity. Wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?

Think upon the mighty power of God, when men grow bold and impudent in sinning, do they oppress the poor, and crush the needy, *Amos* 4.1 Know that this mighty God can soon crush them under his feet, *Lament.* 3. 34. and feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh, and then they shall know the Lord to be the mighty one of Israel, *Isa.* 49. 26.

Does the horrible impieties and wickedness of men greive and wound thy heart; Know, that he that is thy God is the God of salvation, and he shall wound the head of his enemies; and the hairy scalp of such a one as goeth on still in his trespass, *Psalme* 68. 20, 21, verses. And what says Solomon; If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of Judgement and Justice in a Province, Marvaile not at the matter: For he that is higher then the highest regardeth; and there be higher then they, *Eccles.* 5. 8.

4. Act faith in the mighty power of God, as in times of great sinning, so in times of serving and worshipping of God. So did Daniel, when Nebuchadnezzar the King had made an Image of gold, and set it up to be worshipped, and that whoso fell not down and worshipped the said Image should be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace: And who is that God (saith he most blasphemously) that shall deliver out of my hand? What said Sadrach, Meshach and Abedneg. O Nebu-

Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O King. They served God, and they knew, that God was able and of power sufficient to protect them in the service of him, *Dan. 3. 1, 11, 16, 17.* To this purpose, when our dear Lord would encourage his Apostles, and the subsequent Ministers of the Gospel, to be faithful in the execution of his commands, and the trust committed unto them; He tells them, that all power was committed unto him in Heaven and in Earth. And therefore go teach all Nations, and Baptise them, &c. And teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you and loe I am with you allway, even unto the end of the World, *Mat. 28. 18, 19, 20.* As if he had said, Do you faithfully and courageously execute the Commission I have given you, and be assured, you shall never want my all-sufficient power and presence to support you. I will make all the power I have in heaven and earth, concurring in a way of serviceableness unto you.

O come, let us sing unto the Lord, saith the Psalmist, let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation. Shall we fear to serve that God who is the Rock of our Salvation? Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, &c. Why? For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all Gods; in his hand are the deep places of the earth, the strength of the hills is his also; the sea is his, and he made it, and his hands formed the dry land. If the Lord whom we serve is so great a God, so great

great a King above all Gods, above all Angels, Princes, and Potentates of the World, and above all that is called God; O then with what thankfulness and chearfulness of spirit should we come into his presence! O come let us Worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker; Why? for he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hands, whom he makes to lye down in green Pastures, and leadeth besides the still waters, Psa. 95. 1, to 7. So in Psa. 96. 6. it is said, Honour and Majesty are before him, strength and beauty are in his Sanctuary; Where is the beauty of Gods face seen, and his power and strength displayed, as in his Sanctuary? to wit, his Tabernacle, his Temple, the Congregations and Assemblies of his Saints. God is greatly to be feared in the Assembly of the Saints: and to be had in reverence by all them that are about him: and why? why? who in Heaven can be compared unto the Lord? Who among the Sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord? Psa. 89. 6, 7. And therefore it is, that the Lord hath spoken, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, Lev. 10. 3. When a fire went out from the Lord, and destroyed Nadab and Abihu, the Sons of Aaron, for offering strange fire before the Lord, Lev. 10. 1, 2, 3. To which I suppose that place in the Hebrews hath a special reference, where the Saints being exhorted to serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear, urges this as a strong motive thereunto, for our God (saith he) is a consuming fire, Heb. 12. 28, 29. Thus you see how requisite it is to be a living Faith in the power and sovereignty of God, when we draw

draw nigh to him in the solemn duties of his Worship and service ; and what an encouragement it is , to be fearing the Lord , and serving of him in sincerity and truth , with all our hearts , considering what great things he hath done for us , 1 Sam. 12. 24.

5. Act faith in the mighty power of God in times of suffering. So the Apostle *James*, speaking of the cruelties that were exercised against the Saints in those days , how they had condemned and killed the just , and they could not resist them ; He exhorts them to be patient to the coming of the Lord ; and why to the coming of the Lord ? Because when he comes , *he will come with power and great glory* , Mat. 24. 30. When he comes , hee'l take to him his great power and reign , Rev. 11. 17. When he comes , he will come with ten thousand of his Saints ; What to do ? To execute Judgement upon all , and to convince all that are ungodly , of all their ungodly deeds , which they have ungodly committed , &c. Jude , vers. 14, 15. When he comes , he will come with fire , and with his chariots , like a Whirlwind , to render his anger with fury , and his rebuke with flames of fire , Isa. 66. 15. When he comes , he will come with vengeance , even God with a recompence , he will come and save you , Isa. 35. 4. And then the hand of the Lord , (the power of God) shall be known towards his servants , and his indignation towards his enemies , Isa. 66. 14. So the Author to the Hebrews , when he exhorts the Saints to a patient suffering and undergoing of the Cross of Christ ; what Argument does he use :

use? even this, *For yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry, Heb. 10. 37.* The Apostle would have all the suffering Saints to be acting faith in a powerful Redeemer, even in him who is mighty to save, *That will tread down the people in his anger, and make them drunk in his fury, and will bring down their strength to the earth, Isa. 63. 6.* So the Apostles, (when the Priests and Rulers of the people had laid hands on them, and put them in hold, for teaching the People, and Preaching through Jesus the resurrection from the dead, and had further threatened them for speaking any more in the name of Jesus, and had let them go) what Arguments in Prayer do they use? *Lord thou art God, which hast made Heaven and Earth, and the Sea, and all that in them is. Who by the mouth of thy servant David, hast said, why did the Heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The Kings of the Earth stood up, and the Rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy Child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand, and thy counsel determined before to be done. And now Lord behold their threatnings, Act. 4.* Though they had to deal with great and potent Adversaries, yet they well knew, that God was above them, and that their rage and fury was not so much against them, as against the Lord *Jehovah* himself, and against his Christ, whom he had appointed to be the chief Priest, and Prophet, and King of his Church, who could easily break them with his

his rod of Iron, and dash them in peices like a Potters Vessel. They knew that the Lord whom they served, was able to deliver them, as *Daniel* out of the Lions mouths. Soit is said of *Moses*, and laid down as a singular act of Faith in him, that he forsook Egypt, and feared not the wrath of the King, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible, Heb. 11. 27. Now this was an act of Faith in the power of God. He knew, that though he might incur the wrath of an enraged King by refusing the honours and dignities of his Court; yet his eye being fixt upon a most powerful invisible Lord God, that was sufficient to uphold him under all the sufferings he might undergo for his sake. And that this Lord was able to strike through Kings in the day of his wrath, Psa. 110. 5. In which spirit of faith and confidence *David* brake forth, when he said, *Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me, thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me*, Psa. 138. 7. So *Paul* that tried Apostle, and courageous sufferer for Christ; *For which cause* (saith he) *I also suffer these things, nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have beleived, and I am perswaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.* He acts faith in the ability and all-sufficiency of God, to carry him through all difficulties and hardship for Christ, 2 Tim 1. 12. And upon this score it was, he so much encouraged his Son *Timothy* in the faith, as to a suffering state for Christ. *Be not therefore ashamed of the Testimony of our Lord, nor of me his Prisoner, but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the*

Gospel according to the power of God, as in the 8. ver. of that Chap. Whether he meant Christ the power of God, 1 Cor. 1. 24. Or whether he would have him bear those afflictions patiently, as God afforded him power and strength; yet surely, I cannot exclude, but take in the exercise of his faith in the power of God, in all his sufferings for Christ, whose power will ever be manifested in weakness. And therefore it is, that we are exhorted to be looking up unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our Faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God, at the right hand of God in power. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

Now this looking up unto Jesus, is not only a looking up unto him as a pattern and example of patience, in our sufferings and persecutions, for his and the Gospels sake; but we must look upon him also, as made perfect by suffering, who for the suffering of death is now crowned with glory and honor; as him, whom God hath highly exalted, and set at the right hand of the throne of God, where he must sit and reign till all his enemies be made his foot-stool, or as the Apostle expresseth it, Till he hath put all his enemies under his feet, 1 Cor. 15. 25. Thus you see how necessary it is to be Acting faith, as in the blood of Christ, so in the power of God.

And that First, In times of great difficulties and straits.

2. In times of sore sicknesses and deaths.

3. In

3. In times of great sinning.
4. In times of serving and worshipping of God.
5. In times of suffering for God.

Thirdly, We are to Act Faith in the faithfulness of God. Know therefore (saith Moses) that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy, with them that love him, and keep his commandments to a thousand generations, Deut. 7. 9. The consideration whereof, made the Psalmist break forth into this pious interrogation or expostulation rather, Psal. 89. 8. O Lord God of Hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee?

Consider then that this Faith in the faithfulness of God is to be acted upon several accounts.

First, Upon the account of the unchangableness of Gods love, and the immutability of the Covenant of Grace, which he hath made with us in his Son, and which he hath ratified and confirmed unto us in his most precious blood. See the 39. Psalm, speaking of David as a Type of Christ, The Lord promiseth there, That the enemy shall not exact upon him, nor the son of wickedness afflict him; And that he will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him. But my faithfulness (saith he) and my mercies shall be with him, Ver. 22, 23, 24. So in the 30, 31, 32, 33, and 34. Vers. of that Psalm. If his Children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments. If they break my statutes, and keep not my Commandments, then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. But what follows? Nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My Covenant will I not break, nor alter the

thing that is gone out of my lips. So David in the 2 Sam. 23. 5. Although my house be not so with God yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things, and sure. Now that Gods love in Christ is unchangable, as it is founded upon the immutability of the New-covenant of Grace, appears.

1. Because it is dearer then a Mothers love to her sweetest, and most tender Babe, Isa. 49. 15. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet I will not forget thee.

2. It is stronger then the Mountains, Isa. 54. 10. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee.

3. It is as constant as the courses of the Sun, Moon, and Stars, of the Day, and of the Night, Jer. 31. 35, 36. Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon, and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar, the Lord of Hosts is his name. If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a Nation before me for ever.

4. It is as sure as God himself, Psal. 89. 35. Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lye unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the Moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven. We give much credit to the word of an honest man, much more when we have his oath for it. This the Author to the Hebrews makes the ground or

found-

foundation of a Beleivers strong consolation. Wherein God willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath, That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lye we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul both sure and stedfast, &c. Heb. 6. 17, 18, 19. And this was it without all question, that made the Apostle break out with that holy boldness, and exultation of spirit. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ, shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more then Conquerors through him that loved us. For I am perswaded (saith he) that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, or powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, Rom. 8. 35. to the end. Now this stability, and firmness of Gods love, grounded upon the faithfulness of God, may be a great support to the poor doubting soul, that is apt to question the Love of God, and the certainty of its eternal estate in Christ.

2ly. This Faith in Gods faithfulness, is to be rested upon the account of our Vocation or Calling to, and confirmation or establishment in the race of God. God is faithful (saith Paul) by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord: And therefore will he stand with us unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. 1. 8, 9. That he will stand with us

hath called you unto the communion, or fellowship of his Son; not externally only, in point of Ordinances, Church-fellowship, and Publique worship, whereby we profess to have communion with Christ, and his benefits; but internally in a special manner, whereby we are really united to him by faith, and by the spirit of Christ, and so are made partakers indeed of all the glorious benefits, priviledges, and advantages of his death, resurrection, ascension, intercession, *Rom. 8. 32 Eph. 3. 17. 1 Job. 1. 3.* This God who hath so called you, is the faithful God, faithful in the performance of all his promises he hath made, to confirm you unto the end, not to leave you, nor forsake you, *Heb. 13. 5.* as many freinds do in time of adversity; not to cast you off, *Rom. 11. 1, 2.* as many Parents do their Children; not to forsake you, as many cruel and unnatural Women do their sucking children, *Isa. 49. 15.*

No surely, he will not do it, his faithfulness is engaged to stand by you; fear not, he will be with thee: be not dismayed, he is thy God; he will strengthen thee, yea, he will help thee, yea, He will uphold thee with the right hand of his righteousness, *Isa. 41. 10.* And make an everlasting Covenant with thee, that he will not turn away from thee to do thee good, but will put his fear into thine heart, that thou shalt not depart from him, *Jer. 32. 40.* So the Apostle Paul praying for the *Thessalonians*, that the very God of peace might sanctifie them wholly, and that their whole spirit, and soul, and body, might be preserved blameless unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ: He makes this the ground of his confidence, *Faithful is he that calleth*

you, who also will do it, 1 Theff. 5. 23, 24. So 2 Theff. 3. 3. But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you and keep you from evil. Why shouldst thou then fear of falling away, or of thy persevering in the grace of God, when Gods faithfulness is engaged for thy establishment?

3ly. This faith in Gods faithfulness is to be acted upon the account of a Christians temptations and conflictings with sin and Satan, 1 Cor. 10. 13. There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man; but God is faithful (observe that I pray you) who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. Thou poor tempted soul, thou thinkest perhaps, that no temptations are like unto thine, but thou art mistaken, thy temptations are not singular, but in common with others, other men have been exercised with the like. And thou art apt to think, thou shalt sink under thy temptations, thou findest so little strength to undergo them, but what saith the Apostle, God is faithful, and will not suffer you to be tempted above your strength, but will proportion suitable strength, according to your trials. Gods Faithfulness is engaged to help you and to support you under all your temptations and trials. Would Satan then make thee beleive that thy sins are of that nature and magnitude that they shall not be forgiven, think upon Gods faithfulness then who is engaged to pardon thee. So saith John, 1 Joh. 1. 9. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. It would be an act of unfaithfulness and injustice

ⁱn God, if he should not pardon and forgive poor penitent sinners who confess and forsake their sins. But God is faithful and just, and cannot falsifie his word; *If we beleive not, yet he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself,* 2 Tim. 2. 13.

4. This acting of faith in Gods faithfulness is of excellent use in order to our standing fast in the faith, and continuing in our publique faithful testimony for the Lord, *Heb. 10. 23. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering (and why?) for he is faithful that hath promised,* faithful in performing what he hath promised, *Josh. 23. 14.* And what hath he promised? Surely, as hath been declared before, *to establish and keep us from evil, and confirm us unto the end,* 1 Cor. 1. 8. According to that also in 2 Thess. 3. 3. *But the Lord is faithful, who shall establish you, and keep you from evil: Stablish you in the faith, lest you fall from it; and keep you from evil, to wit, the Devil, lest he subvert your faith by evil men, as the instruments of his art; or it may be taken more generally, for any evil; as the Apostle declares in the 2 Tim. 4. 18. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly Kingdom.* And therefore we may upon this consideration be much encouraged to hold fast our profession, and not to be staggering or wavering in our honourable and faithful testimony for the Lord.

5. This acting of faith in Gods faithfulness is of excellent use to encourage us as to a suffering state for Christ, and to Christian contentation under the Cross. *It is a faithful saying* (saith the Apostle)

Apostle) that if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him; If we suffer, we shall also reign with him, 2 Tim. 2. 11, 12. Rule or reign as Kings, so the word it seems, imports, if we endure all manner of tribulations with patience and stedfastness in the faith. And it is a faithful saying (saith he) a certain, sure, firm, credible, irrevocable word, not to be questioned or doubted. Or we shall be glorified together with him, as the Apostle expresseth it, Rom. 8. 17. and Gods faithfulness is engaged to make it good; whence is that exhortation of the Apostle, 1 Pet. 4. 16, 19. In the 16. verse he tells them, That if any man suffer as a Christian (and not as an evil doer) let him not be ashamed (saith he) but let him glorifie God on this behalf. And then in the 19. verse. Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator. God is not onely a powerful Creator, but also a faithful Creator, a sure Preserver, who will faithfully recompense all your hard services and sufferings you undergo for his sake.

He is as faithful as he is able; according to that of Paul to Timothy, encouraging him to be a partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel, and speaking of his own sufferings upon the same account; Nevertheless (saith he) I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have beleived, and I am perswaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day, 2 Tim. 1. 12. And what was that which he had committed to Gods custody? His Soul, saith one; himself (which is all one) saith another; his works, saith a third; a fourth saith

his sufferings; a fifth his salvation. All which put together, he committed unto God his soul, himself, his doings, his sufferings, his salvation, his all.

And he was perswaded he was as able as faithful, and as faithful as able to keep that which he had committed unto his trust: The Gospel, that the Lord had committed to his keeping, and his Soul he had committed unto Gods keeping: And because the Apostle Peter knew that God was a faithful Creator, therefore did he encourage the Saints suffering according to the will of God; to commit the custody of their souls unto him; who as he had created them immortal souls, so he would not leave them as Masons and Carpenters leave their houses which they build, but would faithfully keep and preserve them. As the Lord himself declares, speaking of his Vineyard of red wine, his Church, whether red, upon the account of the preciousness of its fruits, or else of its bloody sufferings, *I the Lord do keep it (saith he) I will water it every moment, lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day,* Isa. 27. 2, 3.

Fourthly and lastly, We are to act faith in the Promises of God, whether they are such as are of a temporal or of a spiritual and eternal concernment; and know for thine everlasting comfort, thou beleiving Soul, that as the promises of God are the ground of our hope, and the object of our faith, Psal. 119. 49. *Heb. 10. 35. 36.* and chap. 11. 11. So are they all firm and irrevocable in Christ; *For all the promises of God in him (that is in Christ) are yea, and in him*

him are Amen, unto the glory of God, &c. 2 Cor. 1.20. They are not yea and nay, but in Christ they are yea; that is, true in the event, and as to their performance: And Amen, that is stable and firm, being made and performed in and for Christ.

For even as Christ is always the same in Gods promises which are unchangeable, so are all Gods promises of our salvation firm and certain in Christ: and as certain, so are they general and indefinite, and made to all that shall beleive, excluding none but those that are finally impenitent. Consider a few of them to this purpose; *Hee every one that thirsteth, Come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, Come ye, buy and eat, yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price. Incline your ear, and come unto me, hear and your souls shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David, Isa. 55. 1, 3. So Matth. 11. 28. Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Mark 16. 16. He that beleiveth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that beleiveth not shall be damned. 1 Joh. 2. 1. If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours onely, but also for the sins of the whole world. Joh. 3. 16. God so loved the world that he gave his onely begotten Son, that whosoever beleiveth in him, should not perish but have everlasting life.*

Joh. 45. 24. Verily, verily I say unto you; He that heareth my word, and beleiveth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life. Joh.

6.37. All that the Father giveth me, shall come unto me, & him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out, v. 40. And this is the will of him that sent me that every one which seeth the Son, and beleiveth on him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day, vers. 47. Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that beleiveth on me hath everlasting life, Act. 40. 43. To him (meaning Christ) give all the Prophets witness, that through his name, who(ever beleiveth in him, shall receive remission of sins, 1 Tim. 1. 15. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the World to save sinners, of whom I am chief, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time, Isa. 43. 25. I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. So Chap. 44. 22. I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins: return unto me, for I have redeemed thee, Heb 8. 8. Behold the days come (saith the Lord) when I shall make a new Covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, For this is the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, after those days (saith the Lord) I will put my Laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people, and in the 12. verse, For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins, and their iniquities will I remember no more. These are some of those sweet soul-supporting promises, which are made indefinitely to all, and have their, yea, and Amen in Christ, excluding none, but the wilful and final impenitent, and unbelieving sinners. But perhaps thou wilt say, thou hast relapsed and fallen into sin again, after repentance, and thou

thou thinkest thy relapses cannot be pardoned. Remember that men who have not a drop of mercy, in comparison of God, are obliged to forgive the repenting offender, though he offend seventy seven times; God much more, who is infinite in mercy, hath bound himself, by his most firme and faithful promises, 1 *Joh.* 1. 9. and 2. 1. Upon true and renewed repentance, often to forgive and forget the same sin, iterated again and again, *Luk.* 17. 3, 4. *That though thy sins were as Crimson, they shall be made as white as Snow; And he calls to back-sliding Israel to return, and promises to heal their back-slidings, and love them freely, Jerem.* 3. 14. comp. with *Hosea* 14. 4.

So in pangs of the New birth, spiritual infancy, weakness of Faith, Prayer, Godly sorrow, and other graces, let such cordial refreshing Promises, as these dwell upon thy heart, *Rev.* 21. 6. *Mat.* 5. 6. *Isa.* 42. 3. and 57. 15. and 40. 11. which import; How God will satisfy the hungry soul, tender the weak and feeble soul, dwell with the humble soul; yea the exercise of faith also in the promises is of singular use in all kinds and varieties of temptations, spiritual desertions, deep & almost despairing apprehensions of thine extreme vileness and nothingness in grace, in which dark, dismal and disconsolate estate, let thy faith be exercised on such precious soul-supporting promises as these, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. *Jam.* 1. 2. *Isa.* 30. 18. and *Isa.* 43. 25. Which speaks to this effect; *That God is faithful, and will not suffer us to be tempted above our strength. That we should count it all joy when we fall into divers temptations. That all they are blessed that wait for the Lord.* So that if thou diest
in

in this waiting state, thou shalt be certainly saved, for the holy spirit pronounceth thee blessed. And further, for the exceeding great comfort and support of thy soul, that, *it is the Lord, and he onely that blotteth out thy transgressions for his own sake, and will not remember thy sins.*

So in the Hail-storms of Slanderous Arrows, and empoysoned Darts of disgrace, how should thy Faith be fixt upon such pretious Promises as these, *1 Pet. 4. 18. Mat. 5. 11. Yea, in the valley of the shadow of death, by an assurance of Gods merciful omnipotent presence, Psa. 23. 4. And in the extremity and depth of such desperate distresses and perplexities, wherein in thy present feeling, thou canst see and find no possibility of help from Heaven or Earth, God or man, but art both helpless and hopeles, as the Church complains, Lam. 3. 18. Let thy meditations dwell upon such like precious promises as these, Isa. 33. 9, 10. 2 Chron. 20. 12. Exod. 14. 13. Psal. 78. 65, 66. Gen. 22. 14. All which import, that in the Mount of the greatest difficulties, God will be seen. Well, in every thing, or any thing that shall or can possibly befall thee, prosperity or poverty, cross or comfort, calmness of conscience, or tempests of terror, life or death, thou maist by Faith extract abundance of unconquerable patience and peace of soul, from those three heavenly golden conduits of sweetest comfort, Rom. 8. 18. and 28. 32. to wit, *That the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.**

2. *That all things shall work together for good to them that love God.*

3. *That*

3. That he that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

Object. But may I all faith in the Promises for things temporal, as for spiritual? Yea, for godliness bath the Promise of the life that now is, as of that which is to come, 1 Tim. 4. 8. Yet consider withal, that temporal things are not promised absolutely, but conditionally.

1. With limitation to expediency.

2. By way of commutation and compensation with spiritual; If he gives thee not peace, he will give thee patience, if not wealth, yet contentment, which may be far better.

3. With exception of the Cross, Houses, and Brethren, and Sisters, and Lands with persecution, Mark 10. 30. So then we may believe, we shall have temporal blessings, which God hath promised conditionally, so far forth as will stand with these conditions, his own glory, our spiritual good, and everlasting salvation. This life, is but, *via ad vitam*, the way to life, and whatsoever God promiseth us in the way, is, but to help us to the end of our journey. There is no temporal thing of this life falls within the compass of Gods promise, but so far forth as it shall be a help and furtherance unto us, as to our eternal life. I shall therefore present unto thy view, a few of those Promises, which are of a temporal concernment, as having reference to long Life, Children, Lands, Riches, Honour, and external Peace and Plenty; See to this purpose, Gen. 22. 17. and 49. 15. Lev. 25. 18, 19, 21. and 26. 4, 5, 6, &c. Dent. 5. 16. and 28. 4, 11, 13. Psa. 112. 3. and 128.

128. 2, 3, 4. and many such like, which are propounded upon the diligent and exact observation of Gods Law, and the fear of the Lord. So for the duties and works of thy particular calling, which if by prayer thou dost conscientiously and diligently discharge, thou mayest go on with comfort, contentment, and freedom from carking cares, and racking, torturing, thoughtfulness, and leave the success, issue, and event of all thy labours and undertakings, unto the Lord, whatsoever it may be, resting sweetly, and ever relying upon this gracious promise, *Heb. 13. 5. I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.* The like in ordering and guiding the affairs of thy Family, depend by faith upon Gods blessing, the strength and sinew of all sound comfort, and true contentation that way, *Psa. 127.* So, in the loss of outward things, for thy love and service unto God, by beleiving that Man of God, *2 Chron. 25. 9. The Lord is able to give thee much more then this;* yea, in the loss of all earthly things in every kind, by applying that promise in *Hab. 3. 17, 18.* And that of *Jobs* patient blessing of God upon the surprise of all his substance, and the concurrence of an universal misery, should not pass without a serious consideration, if God should exercise thee with the like condition, *Job 1. 21.*

But I shall forbear to enlarge further, and recommend to thy consideration some of those promises for thy faith to be exercised in, which have a special relation as to the present visitation of the Lord, as *Exod. 23. 5. Ye shall serve the Lord your God, &c. And I will take sickness away from the*

the midst of thee; So Deut. 7. 12, 15. If ye hearken to these judgements, and keep and do them, the Lord thy God shall keep unto thee the Covenant and the mercy which he swore unto thy Fathers; And he will love thee and bless thee, and multiply thee. And in the 15. vers. The Lord will take away from thee all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt upon thee, but will lay them upon all them that hate thee. So in the Prayer that Solomon made, at the Feast of the Dedication of the Temple, 1 King. 8. 37, 38, 39. If there be in the Land Famine, if there be Pestilence, &c. Whatsoever Plague, whatsoever sickness there be, what prayer and supplication soever be made by any man, which shall know the plague of his own heart; Then hear thou in Heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest; And the Lord graciously promised, that he would do according to his prayer and supplication that he had made, 1 King. 9. 3. So Psa. 41. Blessed is he that considereth the poor, the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the Earth, and thou wilt not deliver him into the will of his enemies. The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing, thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness; So Psa. 91. 3, 6, 7, 10. Surely, he shall deliver thee from the noysom Pestilence, Thou shalt not be afraid of the pestilence that walketh in darkness: nor for the destruction that wasteth at noon-day: A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee. Art thou sick then? apply; The Lord

M

will

will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing. Thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness. Art thou there where the sick are? apply; I will take away all sickness from the midst of thee. Fearest thou the Pestilence? I will deliver thee, saith the Lord, from the noysome Pestilence. So that of Elisha to Job; He shall deliver thee in six troubles yea, in seven, there shall no evil touch thee; in famine he shall redeem thee from death, and in war from the power of the sword. Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the Tongue, neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh, &c. Art thou shalt know that thy Tabernacle shall be in peace. Job 5. 19, 20, 21, 24. So in Isa. 43. 2. The Lord promiseth he will be with us in the fire; and in the water, the waters shall not overflow us, nor the fire devour us; And in Heb. 13. 5. he hath promised likewise, that he will never leave thee nor forsake thee; The labour of the Olive may fail, as Habakkuk speaks; our nearest and dearest friends and relations may fail, our eyes may fail, our tongue may fail, our strength may fail, our flesh and heart may fail, our spirit may fail; yet saith the Lord, I will be with thee, I will not fail thee nor forsake thee; When the poor and the needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. Isa. 41. 17. What can be more refreshing and supporting to the poor languishing fainting, sinking soul? Thus in any trouble of soul, body, good name, outward state, present or to come, thou maist by the sovereign power of faith, working upon the word of his promise,

not

not only draw out the sting, and expell the poison of it; but also procure a great deal of comfort to thy truly humbled soul, and maintain it in despiight of all mortal or infernal opposition, in a constant spiritual gladness. Considering, that all those Promises whereupon thy heavy and disconsolate heart in such cases may repose and refresh it self, have their being and confirmation from the blessed name *Jehovah* it self, see *Exod. 6. 3.* and therefore as sure as God himself; they are sealed with the bloody sufferings of his only Son, and therefore as true as Truth it self; and if thou art in Christ, are all as certainly thine, as the heart in thy body, or blood that runs in thy veins. Nay, and a little more for thy comfort, the glory of Gods Truth is mightily advanced, and himself extraordinarily pleased, by thy more resolute, stedfast and triumphant cleaving unto them. What a blessed, sweet and heavenly life then is the Life of Faith, as it is exercised in the Promises of God?

O then be encouraged to beasting Faith in the Promises, and to be storing up a good stock of Promises every day. They are of excellent use in all estates, in all conditions, in all kind of distresses whatsoever. By beleiving the Promises we shall prosper, by beleiving and applying of, them, we shall come to participate of the Divine Nature, *2 Pet. 1. 4.* And therefore they are called exceeding great and precious promises, *That by these (saith the Apostle) you might be partakers of the Divine Nature; not of the substance, but of the quality. Non transformatione nature humane in divinam, sed participatione donorum, quibus conformes efficiamur divine nature,* as one distinguisheth very

M 2

well;

well; not by the transformation of the humane nature into the divine; but by the participation of gifts whereby we are made conformable to the Divine Nature. And so it notes a fellowship with God in his holiness, and a fellowship with God in his blessedness, that is, in the beatifical vision and brightness of glory; upon which account, as to the excellent use and nature of them, one termeth them a Christians *Catholicon*, a general purging Medicine, a Salve for every sore, being a help to all duties, a quickner of all graces, and a comfort in all distresses. And like a well-fill'd Apothecaries shop, there is contained in them, heavenly receipts of all sorts, wholesome physick of every kind, for expelling and curing all sorts of diseases and sicknesses incident to Saints, and for the corroborating and strengthening of the new nature and keeping the spiritual man in a good healthful constitution, lusty and strong, able for Gods Service, and for working out his own salvation with fear and trembling.

Wouldst thou then have thy faith like the Light in the Lords Sanctuary, never to go out? then acquaint thy self with Gods Promises, know them well, meditate on them, confer about them: let them be continually in thy mind, memory, heart and tongue. Satan laboureth in nothing more, then to keep us in unbeleif, especially of particular promises; for he knows, if we beleive them, we shall in all things have the victory: Come before God with boldness, carry peace in our own bosomes to our graves, and do, and suffer any thing for God.

Oh, the abundance of sweet cordial comfort, which

which all humble beleiving souls draw by faith out of every promise. And these precious promises (our breasts of consolation) whereupon our comfort and happiness so much depend, lye hid in the holy Scriptures, as veins of gold in the earth. How then should we be searching into those rich mines that bring to light such heavenly treasures? and how should it stir us up to go to God in prayer, for the accomplishment of them unto us, and waiting in the diligent use of all means for the gaining of them? you shall find God not only making you heirs of Promises, but you shall be comfortable possessors of those many good things, which God hath promised to beleivers. And the more you meditate, and the oftner you pray upon them, the more good will you see in them, and find to flow from them. And this leads me to the next Spiritual Receipt and Sovereign Antidote, and that is Prayer.

The Fourth Spiritual Receipt.

4ly. The fourth special Receipt and preservative against this contagious disease, or which may be of excellent force and efficacy for the removal of it; is *faithful and fervent Prayer*. This is a tried receipt, an approved remedy; of which I may say, as David said to Abimelech the Preist, concerning the Sword of Goliath, *There is none like to it*, 1 Sam. 17. 9. A most incomparable weapon, if we have kill to use it.

Let us consider a little then what Prayer is, as to the derivation and definition of it. I find that Prayer comes of a word in the Hebrew, which signifies

nifieth, *Appeal*; whereby we refer the Cause of our selves or others unto God, as unto the Supreme Judge; calling upon him, appealing unto him for right, presenting our selves and our cause unto him, as to one who hath power to determine Causes, and to whom appeals may be made. And if you would have a breif description of it, It is the pouring out of the humble, penitent, beleiving soul before the Lord, 1 Sam. 1. 15. Or as one very pithily defines it, It is *Devotæ animæ cum Deo colloquium*, that is, It is the talk or conference of the devout soul with God. For a man barely to speak in the air, and his heart have no approaches unto God in it, this is no Prayer in Gods account. I cannot therefore let pass, that excellent saying of Bernard, *Cum oramus, cum Deo loquimur, cum legimus, Deus nobiscum loquitur: Si vis cum Deo semper esse, semper ora, & semper lege*; that is, When we pray, we speak with God; when we read, God speaketh with us: If thou wilt always be with God, then always pray, and always read. More plainly and fully: *It is a work of the spirit of Christ in the beleiving soul, by which we desire of God alone, things lawfull and needfull, with confidence to obtain them, through the alone mediation and intercession of Christ, to the praise and glory of his name.*

So then, if thou wilt pray aright, and find acceptance with God therein; thou must pray to him, and to him alone; in the name, and through the alone mediation and intercession of Christ, by the powerful, and immediate help and assistance of his own spirit; and that beleivingly, from the heart, with understanding, and feeling of our
wants,

wants, in fervency of spirit, forgivingly, reverently and perseveringly: Without which ingredients, never think of putting up an acceptable Prayer unto God, with any confidence or assurance to be heard at the throne of grace.

I shall touch a little upon the particulars, for the help of such poor souls, whose desires are to grow into a more spiritual acquaintance with God.

First then, If thou wilt pray aright, thou must pray to God, and to him only, and that in the name of Christ. God alone is to be invocated and prayed unto, not Saints, nor Angels. Christ in his prayer which he taught his Disciples, would have us direct our Petitions unto God our Father which is in Heaven, Luk. 11. 2. Mat. 6. 9. And why to God alone?

1. Because God onley is *Omni-present*, every where present, in all places, and at all times. But this is inconsistent to any creature to be *ubiquitary*, or present in all places. But that God is so, see Jer. 23. 23, 24. *Am I a God at hand* (saith the Lord) *and not a God a far off?* Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him, saith the Lord? Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord? see Psal. 139. 7, 8. *God is not only the God of the hills, but of the valleys also*, 1 King. 20. 28.

2. Because God as he is *Omni-present*, so he is *Omniscient*; he knoweth all things; all the hearts of the Sons of men. So said Solomon in the prayer he made at the Dedication of the Temple. *For thou, even thou only knowest the hearts of all the children of men*, 1 King. 8. 39. So Jer. 17. 9. *I the Lord search the heart, and try the reins*. Neither is

there any creature, that is not manifest in his sight, but all things are naked and opened to the eyes of him, with whom we have to do, Heb. 4. 13. For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings, Prov. 5. 21. Doth he not see my ways, and count all my steps, saith Job? Chap. 31. 4. There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves, Job 24. 21, 22. So Psal. 94. 9, 10, 11. He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see? he that teacheth man knowledge, shall he not know? the Lord knoweth the thoughts of man that they are vanity.

3. God is stiled a God hearing prayers, Psal. 65. 2. and this David could speak experimentally; Verily, God hath heard me: he hath attended to the voice of my prayer: blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me, Psal. 66. 19, 20.

4. As he is a God hearing prayer, so he is most able to help, Psal. 52. 2. I will cry unto God most high: unto God that performeth all things for me. He shall send from heaven and save me, Eph. 3. 20. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us: Unto him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages world without end, Amen. So Asa, when a mighty host came against him, in his prayer, lays hold on Gods power and ability to help. Lord (saith he) it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us O Lord God, for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude, 2 Chron. 14. 11. So Jehoshaphat, when a great multitude of the Moabites and Amonites

Amonites came against him, he sets himself to seek the Lord, as able and all-sufficient to help him. And said, O Lord God of our Fathers, art not thou God in heaven, and rulest not thou over all the kingdoms of the Heathen? and in thine hand is there not power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee? O our God, wilt not thou judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us, neither know we what to do, but our eys are upon thee? 2 Chron. 20: 6, 12:

5. Prayer is a Divine Worship and a Spiritual Sacrifice. God would have us to call upon him in the day of trouble, Psal. 50. 15. And if we should be seeking help from any other, he will take it very ill at our hands. If we have forgotten the name of our God, or streched out our hands to a strange god (saith the Church) shall not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of our hearts, Psal. 44. 20, 21. In every place Incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering (saith the Lord.) Mal. 1. 11. So Psal. 141. 2. Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense: and the lifting up of mine hands as an evening sacrifice. There was given to the Angel that stood at the Altar, having a golden censer, much incense, That he should offer it with the prayers of all Saints upon the golden Altar, which was before the throne of God. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the Saints, ascended up before God, out of the Angels hand, Rev. 8. 3, 4. By this Angel, we are to understand Christ our Mediator, called the Angel or Messenger of the Covenant, or the Angel of Gods presence, Mal. 3. 1. and Isa. 63. 9. who alone is the High Priest of Heaven, and offereth and presenteth

seeth our prayars with the incense of his merites and intercession upon the golden Altar, that is, upon himself, unto God, for a sweet smelling savour, as is testified, Rom. 8. 34. Eph. 5. 2. Heb. 14. 14. See also Rev. 5. 8.

6. In God onely we ought to beleive, therefore he onely is to be called upon. *He that commeth to God must beleive that he is, &c.* Heb. 11. 6. *The same Lord who is over all, is rich unto all that call upon him.* For whatsoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved, Rom. 10. 12, 13. Again, we are to pray unto God in the name of Christ, which is not rudely and customarily to say these words, *Through Jesus Christ our Lord, &c.* but in confidence of the merites and intercession of Christ to call on God our heavenly Father: For since the fall of man none are called to come to God, or have promise to speed, but in the name of a Mediator. *I am the way, the truth and the life, saith Christ, no man commeth to the Father but by me,* Joh. 14. 6. *And there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,* 1 Tim. 2. 15. John calls him the Advocate (he who pleads our cause) with the Father, 1 Joh. 2. 1. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them, Heb. 7. 25. In Christ alone we have access to the throne of grace; Or as the Apostle expresseth it, *Through him we have an access by one spirit unto the Father,* Ephes. 2. 18. *In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him,* Eph. 3. 12. And what saith Christ himself? *Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name he will give it you,* Joh. 16. 23. So Col. 3. 17.

What

Whatsoever ye do in word and deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God, and the Father by him. Angels or Saints departed do not; nor cannot present our prayers before God. Abraham is ignorant of us, *Isa. 63. 16.* Christ onely is our Mediator and High Priest, who getteth an acceptation of our prayers before God, *Heb. 4. 14. Rev. 8. 3.*

Again, We are to pray in the name of Christ through the Spirit: Likewise the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit it self maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts, knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the Saints according to the will of God, *Rom. 8. 26, 27.* But ye beloved, building up your selves in your most holy faith, praying in the Holy ghost, *Jude ver. 20.* Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, *Ephes. 6. 18.* No praying aright but in and by the Spirit; God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth, *Joh. 4. 14.* And prayer surely is a principal part of his spiritual worship. Is it not sad then to consider how carnal and formal worshippers do deride and make a mock at the Spirit of God! O say they, you cannot pray, but by the spirit.

So for Faith, that also is a necessary ingredient in prayer. James speaks of the prayer of faith that shall save the sick, *Jam 5. 15.* So also *1 Tim. 2. 8.* and *Matth. 21. 22.* And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, beleiving ye shall receive; Now this faith will work to the purifying of the heart. For if we regard iniquity in our hearts,

God

God will not hear us, *Psa.* 66. 18. We haveing therefore gracious promises from God that he will grant our requests, that he will be very gracious unto us at the voyce of our cry, *Isa.* 30. 19. That when we call he will answer, *Isa.* 58. 9. and deliver us out of all our afflictions, *Psal.* 34. 19. We must come unto God, beleiving his word, for that he is true and faithfull; as *Sarah*, who received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child, when she was past age; because she judged him faithfull who had promised, *Heb.* 11. 11. But if hope to speed does not accompany our prayers they are vain. Let not the doubting and wavering man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord, *Jam.* 1. 6, 7. Yet know withal, that this hope sometimes is very weak and feeble, and many times seems to be overwhelmed in the godly, *Pf.* 13. 1, 2. 31. 22. and 77. 7, 8, 9.

Again, As it must be a prayer of Faith, so it must be from the heart, with fervency of spirit. Prayer is not a lip labour, nor a formal devotion; but it is the sighs and groans of a broken and penitent heart. *Hanna* spake in her heart when her voyce was not heard, *1 Sam.* 1. 13. *Moses* is said to cry unto the Lord, when we find not one word that he uttered with his mouth, *Exod.* 14. 15. Hence is the exhortation that we be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, *Rom.* 12. 11. And it is said, that the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much, *Jam.* 5. 16. As the things we beg are of more excellent use for us, so must we be more eager and importunate with the Lord for the obtaining of them. I cried unto the Lord with my voice, with my voyce unto the Lord did I make my supplica-

plication: I poured out my complaint before him. I shewed before him my trouble, *Psal.* 142. 1, 2. This shewed the earnestness and ferventness of his spirit in prayer. So *Pf.* 80. 1. Give ear, O shepherd of *Israel*, thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth. Before *Ephraim*, *Benjamin* and *Manasseh*, stir up thy strength and come and save us: This ariseth from the consideration of the necessity and excellency of what we desire, as also from a burning zeal of Gods glory, and hearty love of our brethren, in opposition to a spirit of hypocrisy, formality, sluggishness and vain-babbling; Thou shalt arise and have mercy upon *Zion*: For the time to favour her, yea, the set time is come. And what then? For *Sions* sake I will not hold my peace, and for *Jerusalem* sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth, *Pf.* 102. 13. com. with *Isa.* 62. 1.

Again, when we pray, we must pray with understanding, *1 Cor.* 14. 15. Blind devotion is no way pleasing to God. The soul without knowledge is not good, *Prov.* 19. 2. God will not be superstitiously and ignorantly worshipped, *Abs.* 17. 22, 23. The blind and the lame was not to come into the house of God. If ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? Offer it unto thy Governour, will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? *Mal.* 1. 8. God requires to be served with the mind, *Matth.* 22. 37. We must therefore know the will of God, as he hath revealed it unto us, by his commandments, promises, threatnings, the approved practices of the Saints, and that we must desire and pray for, and onely so as we know Gods word doth warrant

us. This is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us, 1 Joh. 5. 14. And whatsoever we ask we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight, 1 John 3. 22. So said the blind man that had his sight restored to him again; Now we know that God heareth not sinners, but if any man be a worshipper of God and doth his will, him he heareth, Joh. 9. 31.

Again, We must pray with a feeling of our wants. Christs invitation to come unto him, is to all that labour and are heavy laden, Matth. 11. 28. In prayer we should feel sin as a burden, and mourn under the sensibility of our want of grace. So Ephraim bemoaned himself, Jer. 31. 18. And the Church, Isa. 63. 17. O Lord, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways? and hardened our heart from thy fear? return for thy servants sake, the Tribes of thine inheritance. So, David being made very sensible of his great guilt, after what manner is his spirit led forth in prayer? Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free spirit, Psalms. 51. 10, 11, 12. Now this ariseth from the consideration of Gods judgements due to sin, and of the necessity of saving grace. So Ezra; O my God I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God, for our iniquities are increased over our heads, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens, Ez. 9. 6. And the Apostles being sensible of their imbecility and weakness of their faith, pray unto the Lord for the increase of it. And for this thing, said Paul, I besought the Lord

Lord thrice that it might depart from me. So sensible was he of the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan that buffeted him, *2 Cor.* 12. 7, 8.

Again, our Prayer must be accompanied with a spirit of love and forgiveness, *Mark* 11. 25. And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any man, that your Father also which is in Heaven, may forgive you your trespasses. For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your father forgive your trespasses, *Mat.* 6. 14, 15. And as we must forgive our enemies, and such as have offended us, so must we bear a hearty affection to the Children of God, *Ephes.* 4. 32. and *Collos.* 3. 12, 13.

Again, our Prayer must be accompanied with fear and reverence, in respect of the purity and Majesty of that presence we come into. So saith Solomon, *Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter any thing before God; for God is in Heaven, and thou upon earth, therefore let thy words be few, Eccles.* 5. 2. And we are to serve God acceptably with reverence, and godly fear, *Heb.* 12. 28. Surely, did we seriously consider Gods most excellent Majesty, we should not rashly conceive, or utter any thing before him, but with reverence. So Abraham, *Behold said he, I have now taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes, Gen.* 18. 27. This reverential fear, is an unfeigned abatement of the mind, proceeding from a consideration of Gods divine Majesty, and our own indignity. So the Prodigal, *Father I have sinned against Heaven,*
and

and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son, Luk. 15. 21. So Jacob, I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth which thou hast shewed unto thy servant, Gen. 32. 10. Job abhorred himself, and repented in dust and ashes, Job 42. 6. The Prophet Isaiah cries out he is undone, woe unto him, for his eyes had seen the King, the Lord of Hosts, Isa. 6. 5. and Ezra also, he did blush and was ashamed to lift up his face to God, for that their iniquities were increased, and their trespasses grown up unto the heavens, Ezra. 9. 6.

Lastly, our Prayer must be with perseverance, without ceasing, 1 Thes. 5. 17. The Parable concerning the importunate Widow, was to this end, that men ought always to pray and not to faint, Luk. 18. 1. That is, that we should be constant and earnest in prayer, use all opportunity with the Lord, and not to faint; this is that which will distinguish us from being Hypocrites, and false-hearted before the Lord; For what is the hope of the Hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul? will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him? Will he delight himself in the Almighty? will he always call upon God? No, he will not, Job 27. 8, 9, 10. But the gracious soul loves to draw nigh to God, and takes delight always in his approaching to him.

Thus having spoken of the several ingredients that will make up an acceptable Prayer unto the Lord; I shall speak a little as to the singular worth excellency, and efficacy of it; and the worth and excellency of it appears in this: Because, it

is a sweet priviledge which Christ hath purchased of the Father for us, *Ephes.* 2. 18. It is through him that we have an access unto the Father, so as to come with boldness unto the throne of his grace, *Heb.* 4. 16. Hereby we do and may continually commune with the Lord after a familiar manner, and lay open our griefs into his bosome.

As David, *Who am I O Lord God, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? And is this the manner of man O Lord God?* 2 *Sam.* 7. 18. So again, *From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed; lead me to the Rock that is higher then I, for thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong Tower from the enemy,* *Psa.* 61. 2, 3. Hereby we testifie our dutiful affection to him, as the Prodigal to his Father, *Luk.* 15. 18. And become helpers to others, *Rom.* 15. 30. *Phil.* 1. 19. *Col.* 4. 12. 2 *Thef.* 3. 1. This adds strength to our faith, and gives life to the graces of God that are in us. By it we obtain at the hand of God whatever good we stand in need of, *Mat.* 7. 7. *Isa.* 65. 24. And do grow into a better acquaintance with God. As *Abraham*, *Gen.* 18. 23, 27. For such is the Promise, that if we draw nigh to God, he will draw nigh to us, *Jam.* 4. 8. By it we fight manfully against our in-bred unmortified corruptions, *Ephes.* 1. 18. By it Crosses are prevented, removed, or sanctified, yea, all things are sanctified unto us, and we are so kept and preserved, that we fall not into temptation, 1 *Tim.* 4. 5. *Mat.* 26. 41. yea, often times we obtain much more good then we desire or expect. *Solomon* begged onely of the

Lord, an understanding heart, and God gave him both riches, and honour, which he asked not *1 King. 3. 13.* So able is the Lord to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think *Ephes. 3. 20.* So that of Prayer, we may say, it is a Key to open the door of Gods treasure-house, a present remedy for an oppressed mind, a give of strength to the weak, and an especial means to make a man fit to live knowingly, fruitfully, and serviceably to God in every state and condition *Col. 1. 9, 10.* What shall I say of it? but as one saith well and truly; It is, *Consolatio fletuum cura dolentium, & sanitas agrotorum.* A Comfort for them that mourn, the joy of the sorrowful and health for those that are sick; And for its force and efficacy what will it not do? what hath it not done? It goes through the Clouds, and ceaseth not until it come unto the Lord; and entreaties will not do, it will (with reverence be it spoken) lay commands upon him, *Isa. 45. 11.* Yea, it doth as it were, bind up the hands of the Lord, and hinder him from executing his judgments, overcoming him that overcometh all things. *Let me alone,* saith the Lord to Moses, *or suffer me that my wrath may wax hot against them, (to wit) the Israelites, that I may consume them,* *Exod. 32. 10.* Abrahams prayer had saved Sodom from being destroyed, had there been found ten righteous persons therein, *Gen. 18.* Yea, it is very observable, that the Lord did not leave granting, till Abraham left off petitioning. By prayer Jacob was delivered from the wrath and curse of his Brother Esau, *Gen. 32. 11.* Jonah was swallowed up of the Fishes belly, *Jonah 2. 10.* The three Children

Children from the fiery Furnace ; *Daniel* from the Lions Den, *Dan.* 3. 6. *Jonahs*, and *Pauls* Mariners from the danger of the Seas ; and *Joseph*, and *Paul*, and *Silas*, and *Peter*, and others out of Prison, *Act.* 5. 16. By Prayer *Elijah* stayed the Rain three years and six months, and again obtained Rain, so that the earth yielded her fruit, *James* 5. 17. By Prayer *Elisha* had the spirit of *Elijah* doubled upon him, and procured Bears to destroy the mocking Children, *2 King.* 2. raised from death to life the *Shunammite* Son, *So Chap.* 4. Had the eyes of his Servant opened, so that he saw Mountains full of Horses, and Chariots of fire round about him, and smote the *Syrians* with blindness, which came to take him, *Chap.* 6. By Prayer *Joshua* commanded the Sun to stand still in the midst of Heaven, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies, *Josh.* 10. 12, 13. By Prayer *Isaiab* brought back the Sun ten degrees in the Dial of *Ahaz*, *2 King.* 20. 11. By Prayer *David* frustrated the wicked counsel of *Achitophel*, and often put his enemies to flight, *2 Sam.* 15. 31. and 16. 23. and *Psa.* 56. 9. by Prayer *Hezekiah* was delivered from the King of *Assyria*, and his health restored unto him again, *Isa.* 37. and *2 King.* 18. The *Ninevites* were delivered from the judgements threatened against them, *Jonah* 2. *Peter* raised *Tabitha*, and *Paul* *Eutichus*, that had fallen down by sleeping, *Act.* 9. 40. and 16. 10. The *Centurians* Servant, the *Cananites* Daughter, and Lunatick persons were healed ; men blind received their sight ; the stammering and deaf were made to hear and speak ; Lepers

were censed, and certain persons being dead were restored to life again. So much availeth Prayer with the Lord, if it be fervent. But to bring it a little more close as to the present visitation of the Lord; See of what force and efficacy it hath been with the Lord to appease his wrath and stay the execution of his judgments. When the Children of *Israel* fell a murmuring, and had greatly provoked the Lord by their unbelief, insomuch that the Lord threatned to smite them with Pestilence, and disinherit them; *Moses* falls a pleading and interceeding with the Lord for them. Pardon I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people, according unto the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven this people from *Egypt*, even until now. And the Lord said, I have pardoned according to thy word, Numb. 14. 12, 19, 20. So that only those men who brought up the evil report upon the land, dyed by the Plague before the Lord, vers. 37. So in the case of *Korah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, when the Congregation of the Children of *Israel* murmured against *Moses* and *Aaron*, saying, they killed the people of the Lord; This so greatly incensed the Lord, that he bad them go up from the congregation, that he might consume them in a moment; Hereupon the Text saies, they fell upon their faces, and *Aaron* according to the command of *Moses*, takes his Censer and puts fire therein, from off the Altar, and put on Incense, and made an attonement for the people, for there was wrath gone out from the Lord, the Plague was begun. And *Aaron* stood between the dead and the living, and the Plague was staid, Numb. 16. 45, 46, 47. This sheweth how greatly

greatly the Prayers and actions of Gods Servants
do prevail with him, when they are faithful, ser-
vent, and according to his will, *Jam. 5. 16.*
1 John 5. 14. and foreshewed also the power and
efficacy of Christs meditation for poor sinners, who
is represented by the Angels standing at the Altar,
having a golden Censer, and much Incense given
unto him, to offer it with the prayers of all Saints,
Rev. 8. 3.

For God heareth him always, *John 11. 40.*
And he it is that makes intercession for the
transgressors, *Isa. 53. 12.* and is the atonement
or propitiation for our sins, *1 John 2. 1.* and for
his sake God before whom the Pestilence goeth,
his wrath remembreth mercy, *Hab. 3. 2, 5.* And
the blood of the Paschal Lamb (figuring the
blood of Christ, *1 Cor. 5. 7.*) stayed the Angel
which destroyed the Egyptians from touching the
Israelites, *Exod. 12. 23.* *Heb. 11. 28.* So the
sake of Aarons incense (figuring the medita-
tion of Christ, *Psa. 141. 2.* *Rev. 8. 4.*) Stayed the
plague here from the Israelites which survived.
That as it is written of the Pestilence in Da-
vids time, *The Lord repented him of the evil,*
and said to the Angel that destroyed the people; It
is enough, stay now thy hand, *2 Sam. 24. 16.* So
in this verse, the further efficacy and effect of faith-
ful fervent prayer, for the removal of this sore vi-
sitation of the Lord, is clearly held forth in that
prayer of Solomon at the Temples dedication;
there be in the Land Famine, if there be Pestil-
ence, whatsoever Plague, whatsoever Sickness
there be, what Prayer and Supplication soever be
made by any man, or by all thy people Israel,
N 3 which

which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands towards this house. Then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, &c. 1 King. 8. 37, 38, 39. And the Lord gave approbation to this prayer of his, as you have heard. Thus you see in what way the Lord hath usually been found for the diverting of his judgments, and in which he hath ingaged himself to hear, and to be entreated.

Shall we consider a little then, what is the general spirit of the Nation at this time; now that the hand of God lies so heavy upon it. Is there any preparation now of meeting God, in this way of humble and faithful supplication? O England where are thy tears, where are thy strong crys unto unto the Lord? Will not the King of Nineveh rise up in judgment against thee, and condemn thee? He commanded that Man and Beast should be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God, and turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that was in their hand; and God was entreated, and turned away from his fierce anger, that they perished not.

What thinkest thou, O England, of thy sins? Have they not been crying sins? May not the Lord speak unto thee, and say, as unto Cain; *Who slew his Brother, what hast thou done?* The voice of thy Brothers blood cryeth unto me from the ground, Gen. 4. 10. Or as James in his time, to the rich ungodly men of that generation: *Behold the hire of the Labourers, which have reaped down your fields which is of you kept back by fraud, cryeth, and the cries of them which have reaped, are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabbath.* Ye have lived in plea-

sure on the earth, and been wanton : ye have nourished your hearts as in a day of slaughter : Ye have condemned and killed the just, and he doth not resist you, James 5. 4, 5, 6.

May it not be said of thy sins, as is said of the sins of Babylon, *That her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembred her iniquities*, Rev. 18. 5. Surely thy sins have been crying sins, they have entred into the ears of the Lord, they have reached unto heaven : God hath heard thy hideous Oaths, thy new hellish invented Oaths, thy horrid execrations and cursings, thy revilings and blasphemings. But whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed ? and against whom hast thou exalted thy voice ? and lifted up thine eyes on high ? may it not be said of thee, as of railing *Rabshekah* ; *Even against the holy one of Israel* ? And if thy sins have cryed so loud, mayst thou not think that thy tears and crys for pardon should sound as loud in the ears of God ?

But where are thy repentings and mournings ? where are thy weepings and supplications ? Surely, I tremble to think, what still mine ears do hear and mine eyes see, how few of those sins are left, which cause the Land to mourn, and the Lord to have a controversie with the inhabitants thereof. May it not be laid to thy charge, even now when thousands are swept away by this destroying judgement, that when God calls to weeping and mourning, to fasting and praying ; behold, joy and gladness, slaying oxen and killing sheep, eating flesh and drinking wine, playing and gaming, ranting and roaring, cursing and swearing, pride and voluptuous living ? And what said the Lord ? *Sure-*

ly this iniquity shall not be purged from you, till ye dye, Isa. 22. 12, 13, 14. Nay, is it not most sad and lamentable to consider, as it is very credibly reported, that some under the hand of Gods visitation, do dye swearing and cursing, in a most dreadful and desperate manner.

Well then, consider this ye that forget God, lest he tear you in peices, and there be none to deliver, before the whole land be devoured by the fire of his jealousy, and that he make a speedy riddance of all such as dwell in the land. But for you, who have received an anointing from the holy one, and are acquainted with the divine art of prayer, and holy conference and familiarity with God; be much in the exercise of this heavenly skill, be now improving to the utmost your interest in God; lift up your voice with strength, stir up your selves and take hold of him. And if your consciences tell you, you have fallen by your iniquities, even in the late Apostacy. *Take with you words, and turn unto the Lord, say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously.* Say unto him, *Assur shall not save us, we will not ride upon horses, neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, ye are our gods,* Hosea 14. 1, 2, 3. Say unto him, O Lord, though our iniquities testify against us, do thou it for thy names sake, for our back-slidings are many, we have sinned against thee. O the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble, why shouldst thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man, that turneth aside to tarry for a night? Why shouldst thou be as a man astonished, as a mighty man that cannot save? yet thou, O Lord, art in the midst of us,

us, and we are called by thy name, leave us not,
Jer. 14. 7, 8, 9. Say, *We are all as an unclean thing,*
and all our righteousness are as filthy raggs, and we all do
fade as a leaf, and our iniquities like the wind have taken
us away; But yet, O Lord, thou art our Father: we
are the clay, and thou our potter, and we all are the
work of thy hand. Be not wroth very sore, O Lord,
neither remember iniquity for ever: behold, see we
beseek thee, we are thy people, Isa. 64. 6, 8, 9. Thine
enemies roar in the midst of the Congregation, they set
up their ensigns for signs: They have cast fire into
thy Sanctuary, they have defiled, by casting down the
dwelling place of thy name to the ground. They said
in their hearts, let us destroy them together: O God,
how long shall the Adversary reproach? shall the ene-
my blaspheme thy name for ever? Why withdrawest
thou thy hand, even thy right hand? pluck it out of
thy bosome. Wilt thou refrain thy self for these
things, O Lord? wilt thou hold thy peace, and af-
lict us very sore, Psal. 74. And let the Priests, the
Ministers of the Lord weep between the Porch and the
Altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord,
and give not thy heritage to reproach, that the heathen
should rule over them: wherefore should they say
among the people, *Where is their God? Then will the*
Lord be jealous for his land, and pity his people, Joel
2. 17, 18. Yea, let the Lords Watchmen, whom
God hath set upon the Walls of Jerusalem, never
hold their peace day nor night; even those who
make mention of the Lord, and are the Lords
remembrancers; let them not keep silence.
And give him no rest, till he establish and make his
Jerusalem a praise in the earth, *Isa. 62. 6, 7.* Till
the heavens drop down from above, and the skies
pour

pour down righteousness, and the earth open, and bring forth salvation, and righteousness spring up together, *Isa. 45. 8.* Till the Lord of Hosts be exalted in judgement, and God that is holy be sanctified in righteousness, *Isa. 5. 16.* Thus much for the fourth soveraign Receipt.

The Fifth Spiritual Receipt.

5ly. The next Spiritual Receipt, and especial preservative against this Pestilential sickness, which I shall recommend unto thee, is this. *Have thy dwelling now in the secret place of the most high, Psal. 91. 1.* or as it is further exprest in the 9. ver. of the same Psalm, *Make the Lord thy refuge, even the most high thy habitation.*

In Pestilential and contagious times, and when the sickness comes near to our own houses, most men and womens thoughtss are busied about their habitations and dwellings; where they shall remove and have their beings, so as they think they may be most safe and secure from the stroke of Gods Visitation; and therefore they will chuse (especially such as are more able and wealthy) the best country where is the best aire, and most healthful soil, and the best company, and food, and such other accommodations, as may probably conduce to the keeping of themselves in a sound and healthful constitution. In some cases such provisions as these may be necessary, expedient, and lawful. And therefore it is upon my heart now to direct thee where thou mayst take up a most secure and safe habitation, and that is in God, in the secret place of the most high, under the shadow of the

Al-

Almighty ; and let me tell thee, whoever thou art that seekest security and protection elsewhere, and takest not up thy dwelling in God, thou wilt be frustrated in thy expectation. *Shouldst thou hid thy self in the top of Carmel, Amos 9. 3. Or take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, Psal. 139. 9.* even there his hand will find thee out, and the stroke of his indignation will light upon thee. The only way then to secure thy self, is not to be flying from, but to be flying unto God ; to be living and dwelling in God. God as he is a secret place, so he is a secure place. Every man would be there (especially in times of danger) where he may be most secret and secure. But what may we understand by making God our habitation, or by dwelling in the secret place of the most high. The words are very comprehensive, and of a large extent, but I shall reduce them under some following heads ; after I have toucht a little by way of explanation, or opening of them.

By the secret place of the most high, we may understand Heaven, the seat and throne of God, which the Scripture holds forth under these three denominations or expressions.

To wit, *His high place, his holy place, his secret place.*

His high place, Psal. 93. 4. The Lord on high is mightier then the noise of many waters, Psal. 97. 9. Thou Lord art high above all the earth, above all people, Psal. 99. 2. The Lord is high above all Nations, and his glory above the heavens, Who is like unto the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high, Psal. 113. 5. heaven is a high place.

So it is his *Holy place*, in *Psal. 46. 4.* they are joyned both together : *The River, the streams whereof make glad the City of God ; is said to be, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most high.* So in *Isa. 57. 15.* Thus saith the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy ; And mark what follows ? *I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, &c.* In *Psal. 68. 5.* *A Father of the fatherless, and a Judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation, that is, in heaven his holy habitation, or the habitation of his holiness, and of his glory, as it is termed, Isa. 63. 15.*

So here it is called his *Secret place*, the secret place of the most high ; and heaven may very fitly be called Gods secret place, as well as his high and holy place ; because God and Christ, and the things of heaven and eternity, they are secret, hidden, and mysterious things. *Great is the mystery of godliness, 1 Tim. 3. 16.* So in *Col. 1. 26.* The Apostle calls it, *The mystery hid from ages and generations, but now (saith he) is made manifest to his Saints ;* and the Saints themselves they have but an imperfect sight of God. We see but his back part, *Exod. 33. 23.* but as through a glass darkly ; *We know but in part, but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is imperfect shall be done away, 1 Cor. 13. 9, 10, 12.* Hence it is, that God is said, *To dwell in that light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, or can see, 2 Tim. 6. 17.*

2. Jesus Christ may be said to be Gods *Secret place.*

1. In that he is said as before, *To be the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, Rom. 16. 25.*

2. In

2. In respect of that incomprehensible union that is betwixt the Father, and the Son; *Joh. 17. 21.*

3. Because the declaration or revelation of the Father is from Christ, *who is in the bosome of the Father*, *Joh. 1. 18.* and thats a Secret place. And the Apostle speaks of a life that is hid with God in Christ, *Col. 3. 3.*

4. In respect of Christs eternity with the Father. *The Lord possessing him in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. Then was Christ by him, as one brought up with him, Prov. 8. 22, 30.*

5. Christ himself is said to be, *A bidding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, Isa. 32. 2.*

3. The Church (which was figured by the Tabernacle) may be said to be Gods Secret place, his dwelling place. *God hath desired it for his habitation; This (saith he) is my rest for ever, here will I dwell, for I have desired it, Psal. 132. 13, 14.* To which purpose is that in *Psal. 27. 5.* where we read of the secret of his tabernacle, *In the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me;* which hath reference to the Sanctuary or Ark, the place of Gods abode or visible presence, so to be hid in his pavilion, the Prophet declares the assurance he had, being shrouded under Gods protection; *hide me or keep me safe, as in the most holy place of thy Sanctuary, where none might enter, but the High Priest, and that alone, once every year, and not without blood neither, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people, Heb. 9. 7.* And this is called Gods secret or hidden place, *Ezek. 7. 22.* As his Saints are called his hidden ones, *Psal. 83. 3.* So *Psal. 31. 20. Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence, or thou hidest them in the hiding place of thy presence, where thou always looks unto them,*

them, in secret favour, which the world knoweth not of. So then to dwell in the secret place of the most high, isto dwell in God, in Heaven, in Christ, in his Church, to have a conversation with God in the heavens; As the Apostle expresseth it, *Phil.* 3. 20. For our conversation is in Heaven; To have our affections on things above, *Col.* 3. 2. to live a life of fellowship and communion with God, as the Apostle *John* expresseth it, *1 Job.* 1. 3.

Again, To make God our habitation, includes these four or five particulars.

1. A mans habitation is the place of his constant residence and abode.
2. It is the place of his safety, security, and strength.
3. It is the place of his secrecy.
4. It is the place of his recreation, delectation, or delight.
5. It is the chief place of his negotiation, commerce and converse.

Under these five heads, or several senses, may we understand our dwelling in God, or making God our habitation.

1. Then the place of a mans dwelling, is the place of his constant residence or abode. When we would speak with a man, we enquire where he dwells, where his habitation is, for there we suppose he is resident; So then, if thou dwellest in God, if God is thy habitation, thou wilt have thy constant abode with him, thy residence with him; this holds forth a fixed station or habitation in and with God. Thou wilt not be as a stranger in a forreign Land, and as a wayfaring man, that turneth aside to tarry for a night, as *Jeremiah* ex-

pres-

preſſeth it, Chap. 14. 8. Thou wilt not take up a nights lodging with him, and then away, and be gone, as Travellers and wayfaring men uſe to do, but thou wilt abide with him, let up thy dwelling with him; many will out of a complement, now and then, go and give a Friend or an Acquaintance a viſit: or for diversions ſake, being tired it may be in their Shops, through multiplicity of buſineſs, and their worldly negotiations, they are willing to take a little recreation, when they can beſt diſpence with it. Even ſo do many deal with God, they will give him, it may be, a complemental viſit now and then; Some, they will go to Church now and then, and hear Divine Service (as they call it) or it may be if they hear where an able powerful man Preacheth, they will perhaps out of a humour, or ſome itching deſire, go and hear him; And others they will give God a viſit now and then; if it be but to ſtop the mouth of conſcience, they will pray now and then, and hear now and then, when their worldly occaſions will give them leave, they will be ſerving God when they know not how to ſerve themſelves. Nay, it may be, they will go a ſtrain higher, and expreſs ſome kind of delight in what they do, it ſhall be ſome kind of recreation unto them now, and then to come among the aſſemblies of Gods Saints, like thoſe whom the Lord reproves in the Prophet Ezekeiels time, forward hearers they were, they ſpake one to another, every one to his Brother, ſaying, Come I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the Lord; And (ſaies the Lord) they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they ſit before thee they

as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them; for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument; for they hear thy words, but they do them not, Ezek. 33. 30, 31, 32. O he's a gallant man, a learned man, say they, how excellently did he speak? even like a lovely song, that soundeth pleasantly. So is it said of Herod, that he heard John the Baptist, and observed him; yea, did many things, and heard him gladly, yet rather then he will part with his Herodias, his darling sin, off must go his head, Mark 6. 20. But this is not to dwell with God. Some people they have their fits in Religion, they will be seemingly devout now and then, and especially if their religion swims along with the times, and is in fashion, and a step to worldly preferment, so long they will follow Christ; but these not having root in themselves, endure but for a while; for when tribulation or persecution ariseth, because of the word, by and by they are offended, Mat. 13. 21. See then that thou hast thy dwelling, in God thy fixt habitation and abode in God. So had the Church in Psa. 90. 1, 2. Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations; Before the Mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth; even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. This Psalm is said to be a Prayer of Moses the man of God, in which Moses does acknowledge the Lord to be their dwelling place, their habitation or mansion-house, or place of retreat in all generations, in all their travails through the terrible

ble Wildernesse, wherein God lead them; God was a refuge unto them in their greatest streights, and troubles at all times; He had promised that his presence should go with him, and that he would give him rest, *Exod.* 33. 14. and Moses did experience the truth of it. And therefore in *Deut.* 33. 26, 27. It is said, *There is none like unto the God of Jesuran, who rideth upon the heavens for thy help, and in his excellency on the skie; The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting armes; So in the 29. verse. Happy art thou, O Israel; Who is like unto thee, O people, saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the Sword of thy excellency, and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high places; And then indeed mayst thou be said to dwell in God, to have a constant abode with him.*

1. When (as *David*) thou art continually with him, *Psa.* 73. 23. and set'st the Lord allways before thee, *Psa.* 16. 8. This will awe us when we have opportunities and temptations to secret sins, *Gen.* 39. 9. This will possess us with more reverence and godly fear in duties of his worship and service, *1 Cor.* 11. 10. This will provoke us to diligence in every good work. The eye of the Master makes a diligent Servant, *Col.* 3. 22. This will comfort us in our afflictions, and encourage us against fears; If we walk through the Valley of the shadow of death, we shall fear no evil, if the Lord is with us, *Psa.* 23. 4. And he will be with us while we be with him, *2 Chron.* 15. 2. If we set the Lord allways before us, we shall not be loved, *Psa.* 16. 8. Moses endured, as seeing him

him who is invisible, *Hebr. 11. 27.*

2. Then mayst thou be said to dwell in God and make him thy habitation and constant place of abode, when thou makest him thy chiefest good, when thou chocest him as thy portion and chief happiness, and livest wholly upon him as thy All in all, *Rom. 11. 36.* When his name and glory is first inscribed on thy heart, chiefly in thine eye, and principally as thine end and aim in all thy actions and undertakings, *1 Cor. 10. 31.* When thou canst say with the Psalmist, *Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee: My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever, Psa. 73. 26.* Then wilt thou not know, nor desire, nor love any creature, but purely, as subordinate to God. If this were but settled in our hearts, how would it ballast them, and keep them steady, that they would not be tossed up and down with the various occurrences of this life, neither lift up with Prosperity, nor cast down with adversity, for whether we have more of these things, they make no considerable addition to us; God is our happiness, and not the creature; or whether we have less of these things, it is no diminution to our happiness; we still have our portion: We are but as a man that hath turned his estate into money, though he hath not houses, nor lands, nor flocks, nor herds; yet he hath that which answers all things, *Eccles. 10. 19.* So it is with one that hath God for his portion, whose is the earth and the fulness thereof; He can with *Habakkuk*, rejoyce in God, in the deprecation and absence of all other things, *Hab. 3. 17, 18.*

And

And say with *Paul*, *As sorrowful*; yet alway rejoycing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things; 2 Cor. 6. 10. Give twenty pounds to a poor man, and you make him; take so much from him, and you undoe him; but it is nothing in a rich mans Purse, that hath thousands coming in yearly; Let an unbeliever loose the World, and he looseth all; he complains with *Laban* that his gods are gone, let him have these things in abundance, and he is transported like *Haman*, but these are small things with him, whose portion is the Lord; And therefore call nothing prosperity or pleasure, but his love, and nothing adversity or misery but his displeasure. When any thing would seem lovely and desireable which is against him, call it Dung; And hear that man, as *Satan* or the *Serpent*, that would entise thee from him; and count him but vanity, a worm and dust, that would affright thee from thy duty to him.

3. Then mayst thou be said to dwell in God; to have thy constant abode with him; When thou halt prize all opportunities of communion with God in his Ordinaunces; as Prayer, Reading, and Hearing, the Word of God. So *David*, As he Hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee O God, *Pla.* 42. 1. O God thou art my God, early will I seek thee; my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee, in a dry and hirsty land, where no water is. To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the Sanctuary, *Pla.* 63. 1, 2. and 84. 1, 2. How amiable are thy Tabernacles O Lord of Hosts? my soul longeth, ea, even fainteth for the Courts of the Lord; my

heart and my flesh cryeth out for the living God. So Psal. 122. 1. I was glad when they said unto me; let us go into the House of the Lord. This to do is our Duty, and our Priviledge:

1. It is our Duty, and part of that homage which we owe to God, as our Lord and Lawgiver, by prayer to acknowledge our dependance on him, Psal. 65. 2. and our subjection to him, by sitting down at his feet, to receive the Law from his mouth, to take our instructions from him, Deut. 33. 3.

2. It is our Priviledge, which cost two of the greatest gifts which heaven could afford; Eph. 2. 17. the Son of God, that we might have acceptance; The Spirit of God, that we might have assistance. What greater priviledge are we capable of? then at any time to go and reveal our cause to God, and to pour out our complaints before him, Jer. 20. 12. To have leave to beg any thing of him, Luk. 11. 13. To ask Counsel of him, Psal. 119. 24. There being in our communion with God a transfusion of spirits, the Lord communicating his Spirit or Divine Nature to us therein, 2 Cor. 3. 18. Besides our own pressing necessities, which should daily provoke us hereto. And the oftner we come to God, the more welcome shall we be, Cant. 2. 14. and the more boldness, and liberty, of access we shall have; dis-use and in-frequency, breeding a strangeness betwixt God and the Soul, and deadening the heart to communion with him.

3. A Mans House is the place of his safety, security, and strength: We use to say, a mans House is his Castle; then we make God our habitation, when we make him our refuge and our strength.

So

So did David, *I will love thee, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer: my God, my strength in whom I will trust, my buckler, the horn of my salvation, and my high tower, Psal. 18. 2.* God was his strength, his defender in all adversities; God was his rock, where he fled for refuge, when hunted and pursued by his enemies, his fortress or strong hold, wherein he was safely kept and preserved; his shield to overshadow and defend him. The horn of his salvation, that is, the strength of his deliverance, and the high tower or strong tower of his protection, wherein to his righteous soul did run and was safe, *Prov. 18. 10.* In the 61. *Psal. 2. and 3.* David prayeth, *I bat God would lead him to the rock, that was higher then he. For thou hast been a shelter for me, (saith he) and a strong tower from the enemy.* So in the *Psal. 71. 3.* *Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort. Be thou to me for a rock of habitation, where I may continually fly unto in all my difficulties and distresses. See also Psal. 31. 2.* With what confidence in God was the Church carried forth upon this account; *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea. Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof, Psal. 46. 1, 2, 3.* By the changing of the earth, and removing of mountains, are often meant the alteration of States and Politicks, *Hagg. 2. 21, 22. Jerem. 51. 25. Rev. 6. 14.* By which we are given to understand, That in the time of the greatest mutations and revolutions in

time of the greatest tossing and tumblings, turnings and over-turnings, the Church would not be dismayed, but confidently expect deliverance from God.

Well then, if thou wilt make God thy habitation, thy place of security and strength, thy rock and thy fortress; Thou wilt make him thy only rock, thy only stay and trust; thou wilt seek help and deliverance in all thy streights and trouble from him, and from him only. *He only* (saith the Psalmist) *is my rock and my salvation, he is my defence, I shall not be moved.* And from hence it is that he encourages his soul, *To waite only upon God,* telling us that his expectation was from him, *Psal. 62. 6, 7.* Nor would he trust in his Bow, nor on his Sword to save him. *Psal. 44. 6.*

Now then dost thou make God thy only rock, thy only refuge? Dost thou flye unto him in all thy streights, and to him only? or hast thou recourse to some other rock? to some other refuse? Take heed of trusting in man and making flesh thine arm: There's a curse denounced against such, *Jer. 17. 5.* Dost thou go down into Egypt, to strengthen thy self in the strength of Pharaoh? know then, that thou trustest but upon a broken staff, and a bruised reed, as *Rabshekeh* said to *Hezekiah*, *2 King. 18. 21.* even in a shadow. And that the strength of Pharaoh shall be thy shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt thy confusion, *Isa. 30. 2, 3.* Dost thou put thy trust in Princes, or in the Sons of Men? know that thou trustest but in a shadow likewise, *Judg. 9. 15.* and that there is no help in them; there breath goeth forth, they return to their earth, in that very day their thoughts peri-

rish,

rish, *Psal.* 46. 3, 4. *And that its better to trust in the Lord, then to put confidence in man; yea, then to put confidence in Princes, Psal.* 118. 8, 9. Dost thou trust in graven Images, and say to the molten Images; ye are our gods? know thou shalt be turned back, and be greatly ashamed; yea, confounded, *Isa.* 42. 17. *Psal.* 97. 7. Is thy trust such as is the hope of hypocrites? know that the hypocrites hope shall perish and be cut off, and his trust shall be as a spiders web, *Job* 8. 14. Dost thou make gold thy hope, and say to the fine gold; thou art my confidence? trusting in the abundance of thy wealth, and strengthening thy self in thy wickedness: know that this is an iniquity to be punished by the Judge, for that thou deniest God that is above, *Job* 31. 24; 28. Yea, further know; That God shall destroy thee for ever, and take thee away, and pluck thee out of thy dwelling place, and root thee out of the land of the living. And the righteous shall see, and fear, and laugh at thee (and say) Lo this is the Man that made not God his strength, *Psal.* 52. 5, 6, 7. Dost thou trust in thine own beauty, and play the harlot, and pour out thy fornications? know that God will judge thee, as women that break wedlock, and shed blood are judged, and will give thee blood in fury and jealousy, and throw down thine eminent places, and break down thy high places, and strip thee of thy cloaths, and take thy fair jewels, and leave thee naked and bare, and execute judgments upon thee, *Ezek.* 16. 15, 36, 38, 41. Dost thou trust in lying words, saying, The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord are these; and notwithstanding Steal, Murder, and Commit Adultery, and Swear

falsly, and Burn Incense unto *Baal*, and Walk after other gods, and stand before the Lord, and say, *thou art delivered to do all these abominations?* know that these are lying words, that will not profit; but consider rather, what the Lord did to *Sibil* (where he set his name at the first) for the wickedness of his people *Israel*, *Jer.* 7. 4, 8, 12. Dost thou trust to thine own righteousness, and commit iniquity? know that all thy righteousness shall not be remembered, but for thine iniquity, which thou committest, thou shalt dye for it, *Ezek.* 33. 13. Dost thou trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men? know, that therefore a tumult shall arise among the people, and all the forresses shall be spoiled, *Hos.* 10. 13, 14. Dost thou trust in thine own purity, and say, stand by thy self, come not near to me, for I am holier then thou? know that thou art but a snok in Gods Nose, and a fire that burneth all the day, *Isa.* 65. 5. and that the Lord hath put no trust in his Servants, and his Angels be charged with folly. How much less on them that dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, which are crushed before the moth, *Job* 4. 18, 19.

But after all this, perhaps thou wilt say, Thou wilt trust in thine own heart, for that will not deceive thee; wilt thou do so? know then thou art but a fool for thy labour in Gods account, *Prov.* 28. 26. Thy heart will deceive thee, for it is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it? *Jen.* 17. 9. Thus you see that God alone is to be trusted in, and to trust in any thing else, will be but as an *Egyptian Reed* to lean unto.

And

And as God alone is to be our rock and our refuge, so are we to make him our rock and our trust at all times. So is the Exhortation: *Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your hearts before him: God is a refuge for us*, Psal. 62. 8. So *Isa. 26. 4. Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength: At what time I am afraid (saith David) I will trust in thee (when his enemies were ready to swallow him up) In God I have put my trust, I will not fear what flesh can do unto me*, Psal. 56. 3, 4. And what said Job? *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: I will maintain mine own ways before him*, Job 13. 15. Is it a time of evil tidings, thou wilt not be afraid, if thy heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord, Psal. 112. 7. Dost thou fear the Lord, and yet walk in a dark disconsolate estate? even then art thou to trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay upon thy God, *Isa. 50. 10.*

And as thou art to make God alone thy rock, and thy refuge, and trust in him at all times, so with all thy heart, *Not leaning to thine own understanding, but in all thy ways acknowledging him, and he shall direct thy paths*, Prov. 3. 5, 6. *Yea, the Lord shall help thee, and deliver thee: he shall deliver thee from the wicked, and save thee, because thou trustest in him*, Psal. 37. 40. This David acknowledged Psal. 22. 4, 5. *Our Fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them. They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.*

Well then, wouldst thou have God to be a help and defence unto thee? Trust in him. *He is a Buckler or a shield, to all those that trust in him.*
Psal.

Pfal. 18. 30. Prov. 30. 5. For who is God save the Lord? or who is a rock save our God? Psal. 18. 30, 31. 1 Sam. 2. 2. He is the rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth, and without iniquity; just and right is he, Dent. 32. 4. Wouldst thou be stedfast and unmovable, as the rock whereupon the Church is builded, against which no storms, nor tempests; no, nor the gates of hell shall ever prevail. Trust in God: They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Sion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever, Psal. 125. 1. Wouldst thou possess the land, and inherit Gods holy Mountain; see that thou trust in him, Isa. 57. 13. Wouldst thou be fat and flourishing, and not cease from bearing of fruit? and that blessedness shall be thy portion. Trust in the Lord. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, whose leaf shall be green, and shall not cease from yeilding fruit, Jerem. 17. 7, 8. Pro. 28. 25. And as David Psal. 40. 4. Blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust: and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.

3. A mans House or Habitation is the place of his Secresie. Where does the Husband and the Wife, or a man and his freind, unbosome themselves, communicate their thoughts, and the very secrets of their hearts each to other; but usually and for the most part in their Houses, in their private Chambers and Closets? So it is with the Man or Woman that makes God their habitation. They'l go to God, and in their Closet and close retirements with the Lord, how will they unbosome them-

hemselfes; and lay open their very hearts, and most secrets thoughts, and spreading them before the Lord.

So did *Hanna* in the bitterness of her soul, she prayed and wept sore, and in her secret retirements she poured out her soul before the Lord, *1 Sam.* 1. 10, 15. meaning the trouble and anguish of her heart. So *David* when his spirit was overwhelmed within him, then he cried unto the Lord, and poured out his complaint before him, and shewed him all his trouble, *Psal.* 142. 1, 2, 3. So *Jeremiah* 20. 10, 11, 12. when he lay under evil reports and defamation, and his familiars watched for his halting, what course does he take? He goes to God, and opens his cause unto him, or discovers his cause unto him, as to an Advocate or Patron. O Lord of Hosts (saith he) that triest the righteous, and seeest the reins and the heart; let me see thy vengeance on them, for unto thee have I opened my cause. So is it said of *Hezekiah*, when he had received the Letter of railing *Rabshekah* and read it, he goes up into the House of the Lord, and spreads it before the Lord, in this manner. O Lord God of Israel, which dwellest between the Cherubims; thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth, thou hast made heaven and earth. Lord bow down thine ear and hear: open, Lord, thine eyes and see: and bear the words of *Senicharib*, which hath sent him to reproach the living God. This hath been the manner of the Servants of the Lord, who have made God their habitation; they go to God in secret, and pour out their souls before him. O (saith *Job*) that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat? I would order my cause before

before him, and fill my mouth with arguments, Job 23 3, 4. Holy Job (even now a Proverb, or a Prodigy rather) perceiving his freinds discourses were fuller of reproaches then consolations, neglected to answer them, and resolves to get him to God, the onely support and refuge of the miserable.

The sorest strokes, cannot drive away gracious souls from God, but rather draw them nearer unto him; they seldome or never think themselves near enough unto God, its Sun, and Sheild, and Center. O that I knew where to find him, that I might come even to his Seat. And Gods Judgment-seat, where he sits to hear and determine Causes, is not terrible or unapproachable to a Beleiver, who knows it to be a Throne of Mercy, as Job did here. And happy are all that can say so; For we must all appear before the Judgment-seat of Christ, 2 Cor. 5. 10, 11. and it will be terrible to all those that do not often resort thither before hand. And it is good to have our hearts and mouths fill'd with Arguments, when we come to plead, and expostulate, and reason out our great concerns with our God; who hath all good things lying ready by him, and waits only for Prayer to come and fetch them away. Not that God stands in need of our informing him concerning our necessities, which he knows better then we; but because hereby we give some proof, that we are not altogether strangers at home (as many careless ones are) but know something of our selves and our own cases, and of him and his dealings towards us. If our mouths then be fill'd with arguments, we may be sure of an Answer. God will not sit still and say nothing, he will not sit like an Image, like a dumb Idol,

Idol, as the Abominations of the Heathens, their *Dii Stercorei*, their Dunghil Gods (as they are called, *Deut.* 29. 17.) must of necessity do, they can do no otherwise, though men fill their mouths with Arguments, and empty their veins of their blood before them, *1 King.* 18. 28. Go boldly then to the Throne of grace, plead with God, and fill your mouthes with arguments; spread thy complaints before him, and open thy cause unto him, for when ever you do so, beyond all, peradventure, God will answer; There's no fear that he will interpret this sawciness and presumption in thee, and so answer thee with his fists about thine ears, or with his foot to kick thee out of his presence; there is no fear that he will smother thee under the waight of his greatness, or dazle thee with his beams, or burn thee with his flames, or drive thee from the judgement seat, as *Gallio* did the Jews, *Act.* 18. 16. No, he never beats his people lower then their knees, and thence suffers them, yea, helps them to rise again; nay, he will lay his hand upon thy head; yea, under thy feet to do thee good; he will stroke rather then strike a pleading soul; He will strengthen thee, and put mettle into thee; He will not plead against thee with his great and absolute power.

So he dealt with *Daniel* a man that had great intimate acquaintance with God, *Chap.* 10. 19. How was he strengthened when the Angel touched him; The Righteous may plead and dispute with him, even at the bar of Equity and Justice, and the Judge cannot but pronounce and pass sentence in their favour; Thus righteous *Jeremiah* pleaded
with

with him; Righteous art thou O Lord, when I plead with thee, Jer. 12. 1. And he invites his people to come and plead freely, Isa. 43. 26. Put me in remembrance, saith the Lord, let us plead together, declare, that thou mayst be justified; if thou haste anything to say for thy self, say on. Yea, Idolaters shall have this permission, to plead for themselves and their dumb Idols, if they have any thing to say for them, Isa. 41. 21. Produce your cause, saith the Lord, bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob, Shall Idolaters have this liberty, and not the true Worshippers, that worship him in Spirit and in truth? The wicked shall they have it, and not the righteous? Yes doubtless, this is that boldness of speech, 2 Cor. 7. 4. mentioned as the great priviledge of the Saints, especially now under the new Testament, Heb. 4. 16. *Accedamus cum loquendi ubertate ad thronum gratiae* Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, Heb. 10. 19. Having therefore boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, (a right and freedom to enter in with our persons hereafter, and now by our Prayers) let us draw neer with a true heart, with full assurance of faith; He hath given us two great friends of his for our Advocates, the one at his own right hand in heaven, moving and negotiating, and always appearing for us; the other sealed in our breasts, his holy spirit, making intercession for us. Yea, the Fathers own heart is full of love, brim full, and running over, and he loves to hear his childrea reason it out with him; and he doth of set purpose delay to grant their requests sometimes, because he loves to hear often from them, to hear their voices, and see their

their faces, *Cant. 2. 14.* to hear what they can say for themselves : and so he dealt with the woman of *Canaan*, in those several repulses he gave her, *Mat. 15. 22, 23.* Acquaint thy self then with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee, *Job 22. 21.* O the secret, intimate, and heavenly familiarity, that is betwixt God and the gracious beleiving soul ; It is said of *Moses*, that the Lord spake unto him face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend, *Exod. 33. 11.* That is, plainly, familiarly: The like phrase is used of speaking mouth to mouth. *My servant Moses* (saith the Lord) *is not so, who is faithful in all mine house ; With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches*, *Numb. 12. 7, 8.* Well then, if thou makest God thy habitation, thou wilt not, thou canst not be a stranger to God, thou wilt have some intimacy with him, some secret talk and communion with him ; thou wilt ever and anon be opening thy heart unto him, and be pleading and expostulating the case with him. *Daniel* could not be restrained from this, though he knew the decree or writing was signed, that whosoever should ask any petition of any God or Man for thirty days, save of the King *Darius*, he should be cast into the Den of Lyons. But he goes into his House and kneels upon his knees three times a-day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God as he did aforesaid, *Dan. 6. 10.* he would rather dye then omit his wonted Worship, and that close intimate communion he had with the Lord in prayer. And it must needs be so ; for howsoever natural men and worldlings, out of their obnoxiousness and secret terror do slavishly retire,

and

and do not willingly, neither dare they draw near to that God, which to them is a consuming fire. *Heb. 12. 29.* Yet all these, who have truly tasted how gracious the Lord is, shall find their hearts out of a secret sense of Gods love unto them first, kindly inflamed with infinite desire to live under the comfortable influence of his pleased countenance, to enjoy his holy Majesty with constant peace, and an humble spiritual access and acquaintance continually. His spirit of Prayer, infinite love, yea, all his loving kindness, protections, preservations, bounty, patience, divine illuminations, spiritual blessings, exercise of repentance, temptations and troubles from Satan, pressures and oppressions from the world, loss of inward peace, faintness of faith, want of spiritual strength, assault of some special sin, sweetness of meditation, daily favours showed down without number, and above measure, the forethought of the great and last account, motions of the blessed spirit, spiritual desertion, &c. but above all, the unutterable, and inexpressible blessedness, goodness, and excellency of that highest Majesty it self, are, and should be quickening and powerful motives to drive us frequently and incessantly unto God.

Object. But perhaps thou wilt say; It is true, the righteous may be thus familiar with him, plead with him, and not be cast in their suit; But where are those righteous ones? And who are they? for it is not so with me; God be merciful to me a greivous sinner; I dare not be so bold with him; Mine iniquity stops my mouth.

Answer.

Ans. I answer, Every one that hath a share in, yea, a sincere desire after the righteousness of Christ, is righteous before him, and may in that righteousness plead and prevail, and as a Prince have power with God: For this is his own righteousness, of his own contrivance and appointment.

The righteousness which is of God by faith, Phil. 3.

8, 9. A righteousness spun and woven out of his own bowels, and the obedience of his dear Son, a better then ever came upon the back of Angels; for which the personal and legal righteousness of a Paul, of an Angel is to be abandoned; *Evangelical* being far better then *Angelical* righteousness.

Thou canst not miss a blessing in his garments, who is not ashamed to be called thine Elder Brother; who came to change cloaths and places with thee, and to take all upon himself, that thou mightst escape. The Father cannot but be well pleased with the smell of his Sons raiment: and he sits too upon a Seat of Judgement, and must do thee right; and Justice it self (which will not be twice paid) is as much for thee, as much thy friend as Mercy, *Rom. 3. 26. He is just, and yet (nay therefore) a justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.* So that if thou art not utterly shut up in unbelief, if there be but the least spark of true faith alive in thy heart, thou mayst go boldly, and plead, and prosper.

Object. 2. But I have nothing to say for my self, my heart is dried up like a Pottheard, and withered like grass; I have sin'd away all arguments, and must never open my mouth any more before him.

Ans. True, not to boast, but to plead thou mayst. And hast thou nothing to offer? not a sigh? nor the groanings of thy soul? *Let the sigh-*

ings of the Prisoners come before thee (saith David Psal. 79. 11. And for the oppression of the poor, and for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise (saith the Lord himself) Psal. 12. 5. I will set him safety, from him that puffeth at him. We owe help from the Spirit, when we are enlarged. He helps us, even when we are straightned. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought (no not Paul and the Apostles) but the Spirit it self maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered. Rom. 8. 26. with unutterable straightnings: Our enlargements may be but the flowings of the Gifts of the Spirit, but our inward pinchings and coarctations, may be the Intercession of the Spirit it self, the more immediate operations of the Spirit.

And we forget that there is such a Prompter behind the Hangings, such an Interpreter (as his Title signifies, as well as a Comforter; *Ille suggerit vobis omnia*, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, Joh. 14. 26.) such an Interpreter, I say, to make known the mind of God to us, and ours to him; and as he betrayeth the secrets of God to the Saints, so he rips up their hearts before God, and fills their mouths not only with windy words, but weighty arguments. Hast thou nothing then to complain of before thy Maker? No Sin, no Devil? no Diabolical Temptations? no stronge unmortified corruptions? no Spiritual Plunderers? no Egyptian Task-masters? no Cruel Bondage, that maketh thy life bitter to thee? no Enemy coming in as a flood to oppress and do the wrong? No Iron-yoke

What galls thy shoulders? no violence and spoil
to cry out and complain of? Sure thou hast not
studied thine own case, thou hast not ordered thy
cause aright, if this fountain fail thee.

Object. But all Complaints are troublesome, men
cannot endure them.

I Answer, God will. *Out of the abundance of my
complaint, and greif have I spoken hitherto,* says Han-
nah, 1 Sam. 1. 16. and you know how she sped.

4ly. A Mans House is the place of his Recreati-
on, Delectation or delight. Where do men re-
create and delight themselves so much (I speak as
to ordinary and daily recreations and delights) as
in their own Habitations and Dwellings? Where are
those intercourses of delights between Man & Wife,
in their Domestick habitation? where are those
reciprocal actions of Conjugal affections demonst-
rated so much as at home in their own houses? they
eat and drink together, they commune and con-
verse together, they sleep and solace themselves
together, they joy and rejoyce together; yea,
where true conjugal love is, they would not onely
live, but they would dye together.

Even so it is with the Soul, that makes God his
habitation. O the intercourse of delights that is
betwixt God, Christ, his Spirit, and the gracious
believing soul. What else doth the Book of the
Psalms or Song of Solomon hold forth? What
does it contain as the cheif matter thereof, but a
most excellent Marriage Song, by way of Dia-
logue between Christ and his Church? Christ as
the Bridegroom, and the Church as his Spouse or
Bride; under the Type or Figure of Solomon, and
his Spouse or Bride: In which Song, in flourish-

ing Allegorical and Rhetorical words; the true hearty love, and the most excellent benefits and favours of the Lord Jesus Christ the Bridegroom unto the Christian Church his Spouse or Bride. And on the other side, the earnest and hearty longings of the Spouse his Church, after her beloved Bridegroom the Lord Jesus Christ, is singularly demonstrated and held forth.

In it the Bridegroom and his Bride do highly extol and praise each other. The Bride to set forth his excellent dignity, his riches, and glory with all those sweet things that flow unto her from him; she doth bring in all the stateliest, the richest, the goodliest, and the sweetest things under heaven. The like doth He in praising her beauty, and her delectable sweetness.

From hence doth spring the great delight and pleasure, which the one taketh in the other, where they do (as it were) unfold the vehement passions of their Love with that fervent desire which she hath to be most nearly joynd unto him, and to dwell with him for ever. Also there do many goodly tokens pass between them: For he bestoweth upon her very rich jewels and heavenly ornaments, to deck and to beautifie her withal and she again rendreth unto him, the sweet fruit of her love. *Let him kiss me (saith the Spouse) with the kisses of his mouth for thy love is better then wine. Because of the savour of thy good ointments, thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee. Draw me, we will run after thee: the King hath brought me into his Chambers: we will be glad and rejoyce in thee, we will remember thy love more then wine: the upright love thee. Tell me, O*

thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest? Then in the 8th. vers. Christ highly commends her beauty, terming her the fairest among women, and under several comparisons he doth highly praise and extol her, Chap. 1. So Chap. 4. even the whole thereof, save a verse or two, is the speech of the Bridegroom, consisting in praises and commendations of the Bride, in declaration of his love towards her. Behold thou art fair my Love, behold thou art fair, thou hast Doves eyes within thy locks, vers. 1. Thou art all fair, my Love, there is no spot in thee, vers. 7. Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck, vers. 9. How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse, how much better is thy lovethen wine & the smell of thine ointments then all spices? Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as be hony-comb: hony and milk are under thy tongue, and the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon, vers. 10, 11. So Chap. 6, 7. How does the Lord Jesus give forth very great and singular commendations of his spouse, testifying his great love and hearty affection towards her: Thou art beautiful, O my Love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, &c. My Dove, my undefiled is but one, she is the only one of her Mother, she is the choise one off her that bare her, &c. How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O Princess laughter? the joynts of thy thighs are like jewels, and so goes on in a description of the Churches graces. And in Chap. 7. 6. How fair, and how pleasant art thou, O Love, for delights? And having praised the beauty and comeliness of his Spouse by several arts, he breaks forth into an admiration and great wonderment of her beauty, in the whole or in all

laid together. They be rare things, that Printes upon earth do wonder at : most rare which the King of Kings bath in admiration. I instance this, to let you see the mutual solace and delight, that is betwix Christ and the gracious soul.

And surely, if thou hast tasted that the Lord is gracious thou canst not but take sweet delight, contentation and delectation in him. *Cant. 2. 3* *I sate down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.* The shadow of a tree (as all men know) is very comfortable, and doth refresh those that are parched with the scorching heat of the Sun. When the Church is under horrible persecutions and fiery temptations of Satan, and the burning heat of Gods wrath for sins guilt in the conscience ; what, but Christ can be as a shadow to refresh, *Mat. 11. 20.* *There shall be a Tabernacle for a shadow in the day time from the heat,* *Isa. 4. 6.* *Thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall,* *Isa. 25. 4.* And this was not all but saith the Spouse, *His fruit was sweet to my taste or to my palate.*

She doth not only receive comfortable refreshing shadow from this fruitful tree, but she eateth of the Apples also which it beareth, and the same are sweet and pleasant to her taste : Which is another benefit the Spouse enjoyeth by Christ ; To wit, that she is not only freed and delivered from evil, but made partaker of his goodness ; in the all the works of his Prophecie, Priesthood, and Kingdom ; his Death, Resurrection, Ascension and all the fruits of them are communicated unto

her by the Gospel ; which she feedeth upon by faith, to the abundant refreshing and satisfaction of her soul.

Fruits signifying good works and the Graces of Gods Spirit, which are to the benefit of our selves and others, *Mat. 3. 8, 10. Gal. 5. 22.* which is also applied to the Doctrine of the Gospel, *Job. 15. 16.* and signifieth a comfortable reward, *Psal. 58. 11.* and *Prov. 27. 18.* So David he expresth his delight in God, by the Delight he took in his words or promises rather, *How sweet are thy words unto my taste ? yea, sweeter then honey to my mouth, Psal. 119. 103.* How sweet ? I am not able to expresse the sweetness of them. How sweet unto my taste, unto my mouth ? that is, unto the mouth of my heart and soul, for otherwise the spiritual promises yeild but little sweetness unto the bodily mouth. *They are more sweet and pleasant unto my mind, then honey is to my mouth.* He meaneth, that he never tasted any meat with his mouth, how good or pleasant soever it were, as he felt Gods word sweet and comfortable to his soul.

To which agrees that in *Psal. 19. 8, 10. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoycing the heart. More to be desired are they then gold ; yea, then much fine gold, sweeter also then the honey, and the honey-comb.* And in *Psal. 119. 11. Thy Testimonies have I taken as an heritage forever : for they are the rejoycing of my heart.* Yea, so delighted was he in the Lord, that he would never think of him, but his meditation of him should be sweet, *Psal. 104. 34.* His soul should be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and his mouth should praise him with joyful lips ; when he remembered God upon his bed, and medi-

ated on him in the night watches, *Psal. 63. 5, 6.* What more pleasant and delectable to the palate then marrow and fatness? and such was the meditation of God to his soul, even in the night watches, in the darkest and most dismal season of Gods dispensations.

To this agrees that in *Psal. 36. 8.* *They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house: and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures.* There's a river of pleasures and delights that flow from God, which as a well of living waters, and an ever-springing in-exhaustible fountain of life and all divine graces, can never be drawn dry; but the streams thereof are always running, *To make glad the City of God, Psal. 46. 4.* Hence it is that the souls Communion with Christ, and its spiritual participating of Christ in his Ordinances, is held forth under the term of Supping with Christ. *If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me, Revel. 3. 20.* I will communicate my self unto him, have mutual fellowship with him; I will dwell in him spiritually, really, operatively by my grace; and he shall dwell in me by faith, feed upon me, receive strength and nourishment from me, and so come to participate of my divine nature.

Hereby then mayst thou come to know whether thou makest God thy Habitation or not: Men take delight in their habitations, there they solace and recreate themselves; and Husband and Wife take mutual comfort and contentation in each other. Consider then what delight thou hast in God, in Christs in his way and worship, his ordinances and

holy

holy appointments, *Job* 27. 10. Dost thou take delight in approaching to God? Is thy delight in the Law of the Lord, and in that Law dost thou meditate day and night? *Psal.* 1. 2. *Rom.* 7. 22. Are his testimonies thy delight and thy counsellours? *Psal.* 119. 24. Is his word unto thee, the joy and rejoycing of thine heart? as it was to that good Prophet *Jeremiah*, *Jer.* 15. 16. And dost thou delight to do the will of God, as Christ did his Fathers, *Psal.* 40. 8. What fellowship and society is there betwixt Christ and thy Soul? *Our fellowship* (saith *John*) *is with the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ,* *1 John.* 1. 3. The baptized and new added members to the Church, continued stedfastly in the Apostles Doctrine and Fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers, *Act.* 2. 41, 42. They held communion with Christ, and each with other in breaking of bread, *1 Cor.* 10. 16. They assembled together, prayed together, praised God together, sung together, suffered and rejoyced together, *Act.* 4. 31. and 2. 47. and 16. 25. and 5. 41.

Consider then, what entertainment thou hast with Christ, does he invite thee to come unto him? and does he bid thee welcome when thou comest? does he bid thee eat that which is good? and that thy soul should delight it self in fatness? *Isa.* 55. 1, 2. Wast thou never at dinner or supper with him, when he killed his beasts, mingled his wine, and furnished his table? and hath he not bade thee to eat of his bread, and drink of the wine which he hath mingled? *Prov.* 9. 1, 2, 5. Christ keeps a plentiful table, you'll hardly find such another noble and generous house-keeper. When he prepares a dinner, he kills his oxen and his fatlings,

fatlings, *Mat.* 22. 4. and will entertain thee with a second course also ; He has his fruit thats very sweet to the taste ; his flagons and his apples, the one to stay thee, the other to comfort thee. And as Princes and great Persons have, he has a noble Banquetting-house too, or house of wine for to welcome thee ; and if then he finds thee but a little sick of love, he will not shun to put his left-hand under thy head, and with his right-hand to embrace thee ; yea, his Banner over thee shall be love, *Cant.* 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

But now if there be no such intercourses of love and mutual delight betwixt Christ and thy soul ? If thou art still a stranger unto him, and knowst not what it is to have communion with him, or to be supping with him ? If when he has bidden thee to the wedding, and hath made all things ready, and sent out his servants to call thee, and thou shalt make light of it, and refuse to come, and chuse rather to go to thy Farm or Merchandise, and be feeding still upon thy husks, or be making excuses, and telling him thou hast bought five yoke of oxen, and thou must go to prove them ; or hast married a Wife, and therefore thou canst not come : Or if thou shouldst do worse then this, take his servants and entreat them spitefully and slay them, *Mat.* 22. 5, 6. comp. with *Luk.* 14. 16. Let me tell thee, thou wilt incense him greatly, even to send forth his Armies to destroy thee. I say, if thy heart is dead, and drowfie, and estranged to God ; and void of love, and dutiful affections to Christ ; thou art far from dwelling in the secret place of the most high, and making him thy habitation.

5. A mans house is the chief place of his negotiation and commerce; where does a man drive his trade, and utter his commodities, but at home, in his house or in his shop? So it is with the soul that makes God his habitation; he drives a spiritual trade and commerce with God; makes Religion his business; Christ invites all to come and buy of his Commodities, and he exposes rich commodities to sale, and there are souls that do trade and traffick with him, *Isa. 55. 1. Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price; Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat that which is good, &c.* Christ excites and stirs up all that do thirst, and greatly long after righteousness, being sensible of their own sins, their nothingness and unworthiness to come unto him, as to the fountain of living waters, that is, by faith to beleive on him, and then out of his belly (saith he) shall flow rivers of living water, but this spake he of the spirit, *Joh. 7. 37.* He invites all, I say, that are money-less, and poor worthless, helpless, and meriteless creatures, to come unto him and buy those heavenly goods which he offers unto us by the Gospel; namely, wine and milk, that is, all things requisite and necessary for our spiritual life; the graces and fruits of the spirit, which are sweet and delightful as wine; and which are as necessary to a heavenly life, as milk is to this natural life, and may take in also forgiveness of sins, and the pure and unspotted righteousness of Christ (which

(which are given us of God in him, and that freely for nought, and without any merits and deserts of ours) together with life eternal. And wherefore (saith he) do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? or weigh out your money for that which is not bread? Wherefore are ye at so great cost and charges in vain, and take pains and toil to no purpose, for dry, empty, husky, unsatisfying, unfruitful and unprofitable things? which when you have them, and enjoy them, will minister no true comfort, nor satisfaction unto your soul. How vain and profuse was the Prodigal, to waste his substance with riotous living, to purchase to himself a few husks, unsatisfying food, which the swine did eat; which when he had them, was ready to perish with hunger, Luk. 15. 13, 17. Of such the Lord complain'd by the Prophet Haggai, *Ye have sown much, and bring in little: ye eat, but ye have not enough: ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink: ye cloth yon, but there is none warm: and he that earneth wages, earneth wages to put it into a bag of holes,* Hag. 1. 6. A sore judgment to bestow ones labour and pains for that which satisfieth not. *Wilt thou set thine eyes (saith Solomon) upon that which is not,* Prov. 23. 5. what is that which is not? the vers. before tells us. He exhorts that we labour not to be rich, and that we cease from our own wisdom. What are riches nothing? nor a mans own wisdom nothing? which the world so highly esteems of, and so eagerly pursueth after: No, they are nothing, that is, as it were nothing, they are not matters or things of any great importance, for thee to set thine eyes upon; and therefore thou shouldst

shouldst not so greedily gape after them, or set thine eyes or heart upon them; because, when thou hast attained them, thou hast got as much as a thing of nothing: And adds another reason; taken from the uncertainty of riches. *For riches certainly make themselves wings, they fly away as an Eagle towards heaven*: that is, they fly swiftly away. The Eagle flyeth so swiftly on high towards heaven, as that he is soon vanished away out of a mans sight, so do riches suddenly perish and vanish away; being subject to fire and water, evil debtors, and many other casualties. And therefore cease from thine own wisdom, which may rather be called *distract* in God, and *covetousness* then wisdom; when it shall violently carry thee away with a desire after riches, which are so transitory and vain. And therefore it is that Jesus Christ does invite these foolish traders to come and buy of his wares, of his commodities, that are not fading and perishing. *Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight it self in fatness. Incline your ear and come unto me, hear and your soul shall live.* As much as if Christ did say, if you will come and trade with me, you shall be sure to have good substantial commodities, no braided wares; you shall have that which will stand by you, and be of special use and advantage unto you. *Hear and your souls shall live, and I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David, 2 Sam. 23. 5.* And these commodities of mine, you may have for the fetching, I don't expect ready money for them, I'll let you have them upon trust, and see how well you will improve them; but be assured they are lasting

lasting commodities, sound wares that will not fail you; Riches and honours are with me, yea, durable riches and righteousness; my fruit is better then gold, yea, then fine gold; and my revenue then choise silver; I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment; That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance, and I will fill their treasures, Prov. 8. 18, 19, 20, 21. Mark, I pray you, Riches and honours are with me, saith Christ, that is, true riches and honour, such as will not fade and flye away, and they are with me, in my power to give and bestow them, when and upon whom I list; even durable riches, such as shall continue, when other mens shall melt away as wax before the Sun; And those that love me, that is, those that do unfainedly love me, shall inherit substance, that which is durable; meaning such wealth or substance as is such really and indeed, and bringeth to man the greatest happiness and prosperity, even eternal life, that endureth for ever. Thus you see, there is a trade, that Christ and the beleiving soul does drive together, and all Christs commodities, they are rich substantial commodities, whoever have them shall inherit substance; not shadows but substance, like unto the Merchandise of Tyre, whose Merchandise and hire shall be holiness to the Lord, and shall be for them that dwell before the Lord (whose habitation the Lord is, mark that) to eat sufficiently, and for durable cloathing, Isa. 23. 18. What can be better then satisfying food, and lasting cloathing, like the Israelites cloaths in the Wilderness, which waxed not old, Dent. 29. 5. The necessity and excellency of which, the Lord Jesus sets forth in
that

that exhortation of his to the Church of *Laodicea*, Rev. 3. 18. *I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayst be rich; and white rayment, that thou mayst be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and annoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayst see.* I counsel thee to buy of me (saith Christ) from whence observe that; all true spiritual riches and graces, (all substantial commodities) are to be fetched from Christ alone. Christ sends us not to our own works, or to his blessed Mother, or to any other Saint departed, with so many *Ave Marias*, so many *Pater Nosters*, or so many *Vows*, and *Pilgrimages*, to buy them at their hands, but he bids us; Come buy them of me; Christ alone is the great dispenser of his Fathers treasure, all power is given into his hands, and in vain it is to seek the Kingdom of God, or the treasures thereof, but in, by, and through the Son; and it is most just it should be so, it being the purchase of his death and passion, he powred out his soul unto death for us, that he might have power to heal our souls of all their infirmities; therefore he is made unto us, both wisdom, justification, sanctification, and all in all. And what are those precious commodities that Christ would have this Church of *Laodicea*, and us also (if we be found in the same vain-glorious, yet beggerly condition, as she was in) to buy of him? Surely, even such as might be a remedy proportionable to her disease.

1. Here is gold, not outward glittering, or pretended gold, but tryed gold offered, to help her of her poverty.

2. Here

2. Here is white rayment, a glorious rayment, of Christs righteousness offered, to cover her shame and nakedness.

3. Here is eye-salve offered, even true knowledge and wisdom from above, the spirits divine illumination to cure her of her blindness, that she might see the way to everlasting happiness. And the manner of seeking and obtaining these rich commodities is as it were by bargain and sale; *I counsel thee to buy of me*; And let us inquire a little how this bargain is made up.

First, Understand in all legal contracts, there is an agreement of both parties, or else it cannot be a bargain.

Secondly, In some bargains and contracts, there is a legal consideration, given for the thing bargained for, either to the full value, or somewhat equitably, proportionable thereunto; Or,

Thirdly, There are other absolute bargains and sales of Lands and Goods, disposed therein freely, onely on the consideration of the Donors or Granters, love, affection, and preferment to the parties beloved, and so given freely to them and their heirs for ever, without so much as paying a Penny by way of legal retribution for it; Yea, the Donor often is so free in his deed of gift, that the Donee is freed of all fear of forfeiture of his estate; for there is not reserved so much as a Rose or Pepper-corn by way of Rent, that for non-payment thereof the state should become forfeited. And that party that would not be thankful to such a free-giver, is worse then an Infidel.

Now

Now to apply this to our heavenly bargain: If we will buy of Christ gold and heavenly treasure, we must first come unto him, and strike up the bargain with him. He will not sell unto us against our wills (though he himself must make us first willing) and therefore he crys, as before, *Isa. 55. 1. Come unto the waters, come ye, buy and eat.* And *Revel. 22. 17. And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come, and let him that is a thirst, Come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of Life freely.* And they now that will not be obedient to the commands and laws of this gracious Donor, by way of gratitude and thankfulness, for so glorious and free an Inheritance bestowed upon them; are not worthy of the least mercy in his kingdom.

If this inheritance were entailed on us, on condition of payment or performance of a small petty grain of Corn, or the like, as is the mite of our faith and obedience, we should be in bondage, fear and danger all our lifelong, if not, at least forfeit all by our non-payment and performance: Therefore blessed be God, that hath not left our salvation in our own hands, but founded it on Christ, the rock which cannot be removed. Now he that goes about to buy a great Treasure, is very careful, diligent, and his affections intense upon it, that none put him by of his bargain: So it must be here for this Heavenly Treasure, we must be earnest with Christ to strike up this bargain, we must not let him alone by our prayers, until we have obtained this precious pearl at his hand. 'Tis true, Christ will sell us this pearl freely, yet we must agree with him for it; though we have nothing to give him in the least, by way of legal compensa-

tion for it, yet we must buy it, receive it in his own way and method.

If you will buy any goods, that you want, you must repair to the Fair, House, or Place where it is to be bought: So if you want tryed gold to enrich you, or garments to cover you, or eye-salve to enlighten you; you must come to Christ, who is the Merchant of these heavenly wares, upon his Fair-days, or when he opens shop, when such precious wares are set to sale: To his Ordinances, in his Assemblies on the publique days of his heavenly Bartering, if you will attain unto this heavenly Treasure?

And these are Commodities worth the buying, the tryed gold that comes from Christ is such that makes the soul truly gracious where it is; and it is truly refined gold, because it is the wisdom and way of God, which is as gold refined, *Prov. 8. 10. and Psal. 12. 6.* It is tryed, and therefore will hold water; we may become rich in the eyes of the world, in parts, abilities, and humane learning; and they may shine like gold in the eyes of the in-judicious, simple and ignorant: but alas, if Christ doth not sanctifie them unto us, they may make us the worse, not the better for them. So for the white garment that must cloath us. Christs garment is such a garment that will reach us from top to toe, that no part of our shame or nakedness shall appear.

Sin brings shame, and sin brings contempt and nakedness upon us; and Christs raiment is a white raiment, an innocent raiment, a glorious honourable raiment; which will not only cover all our shame and nakedness, that the pure eyes of God

shall

shall not behold it, *Isa.* 61. 10. but therein also (he having granted thee to be arrayed therewith) will present thee therein glorious to himself, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, *Eph.* 5. 27. and therefore surely it is worth the buying: our own raiments are spotted, defiled, and will not serve the turn, but Christs is white all over. If we expect to appear perfectly righteous, holy and just before God (or otherwise we shall never appear before him to approbation and absolution, for no unclean thing shall enter into his presence) then we must be sure to cloath our selves in the white raiment of this our Elder Brother.

So for the Eye-salve, with which our eyes must be anointed, if we will be cured of our blindness, and see the way to everlasting happiness. Surely this is of excellent use, and worth the buying, and where are we to get it but from Christ? He is given for a Covenant to open the eyes of the blind, and to bring out the Prisoners from the Prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the Prison-house, to lead them in the paths of life, *Isa.* 42. 6, 7. and *Pro.* 8. 20. Its in vain to go to our own prudence or carnal wisdom, that will more entangle us, and darken us, and lead us out of the way, according to that of Christ, *Joh.* 9. 39. I am come into this world for Judgment, that they that see not, should see; and that they that see (that is, in their own wisdom) should be made blind. Christ made an Eye-salve for the cure of the blind person; *Joh.* 9. 6. of his spittle and clay, a compound matter, proceeding from his mouth and the earth, whereby he made the blind man see: Christ some-

what follows the same method, in his compositions of Eye-salve, which he uses towards his spiritual blind souls that he takes to cure:

First, He gives us the knowledge of our selves, and of our own earthly matter, and that we favour in our unregeneracy, nothing but of earth and earthliness.

Next he brings us to the knowledge of himself and his word, which proceedeth out of his mouth; and so makes us a happy composition and Eye-salve; whereby we come to see our poverty, our shame and nakedness, and all our spiritual wants; and also where remedy is to be had, to heal and to save us from all our maladies.

And indeed, this is as great a blessing as Christ can bestow upon us, to be truly sensible, and to have a clear sight of our condition, it is the next stop to amendment, it is ignorance and blindness that makes us err and go astray; but true saving knowledge will keep us close to Gods Commandments. If we take any other Eye-salve to anoint our eyes with, save what Christ hath prepared for us in the Treasury of his Word, we may take Bird-lime instead of Eye-salve, which will close our eyes the faster. They are not the traditions of men, nor the wisdom and understanding of the wise that will make this precious ointment; but it is a spiritual extraction and ointment, drawn out by the spirit of Christ, out of the holy Limbeck of his Word, and applyed by him unto the blind patient; that will make him see the glory of God and his grace, and to praise him for it to all eternity.

Thus you see there are rich and precious commodities to be had in Christ, and Christ sets them

to sale, and invites us to come and buy them of him; and there is a spiritual and heavenly commerce that is driven betwixt Christ and the believing soul: And no marvail, for where else shall the soul in all its exigents and straights have recourse, if not unto Christ? *In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*, Col. 2. 3. *And in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily*, vers. 9. And as he is full of grace and truth, so it is, *Of his fulness that we all receive, and grace for grace*, Joh. 1. 14, 16. Thus I have shewed you in several particulars, what it is to dwell in the Secret Place of the most high, and what it is to make God our Habitation.

1. To have our fixed Habitation and Abode in God.
2. To make God our Refuge and Strength.
3. To make God the place of our Secret Retirement.
4. To make him the Place, or Object of our delight.
5. To make him the Place of our Negotiation and Commerce.

Which to do, will assuredly intitle and interest us in the promises of protection and preservation, even from this sore Visitation of the Lord, the noisome Pestilence, Psal. 91. 1, 3. *He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most high, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Surely, he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler: and from the noysome Pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terrour by night: nor for the ar-*

row that flyeth by day : nor for the Pestilence that walketh in darknes : nor for the destruction that wasteth at noon day. So in the 9, 10. vers. Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most high thy habitation : There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. Which promises, though it cannot be denied, but they had a special reference unto Christ, yet so to Christ, as not excluding his members.

For the head cannot be severed from the body, but head and members make one perfect and entire body. Now if we are the Body of Christ, and Christ the Head of this Body ; as so it is, Col. 1. 18, 24. then surely all the good and comfort that the head partakes of, cannot but be communicable to the rest of the body. For from the head, all the body by joynts and bands having nourishment ministred and knit together, encrease with the encrease of God, Col. 2. 19. So that I conceive there is not a promise in the Word of God, that is made unto Christ the Head, but all the members of his Body are interestred and concern'd in it. And so much does the prayer of our dear Lord import. That they all may become one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee ; that they also may be one with us. I in them, and thou in me, that thy may be made perfect in one, Joh. 17. 21, 23.

Is it promised to Christ that he shall have a kingdom, and that all People, Nations and Languages shall serve him ? Dan. 7. 14. Psal. 72. 11. The same is promised to the Saints, that shall out-live Anti-christs rage and tyranny. Dan. 7. 22, 27. Isa. 60. 14. Is it promised unto Christ, that they that dwell in the Wilderness shall bow before him

him, and his enemies shall lick the dust? *Psal.* 72. 9. The same is promised unto the Saints, who shall continue faithful to Christ in the latter day, *Isa.* 60. 14. and 49:23. and *Revel.* 3. 9. Is it promised that those that will not, he shall raigh over them, shall be destroyed? And that God will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him? *Luk.* 119. 27. *Psal.* 89. 23. The like is promised to the Jewish and Gentile Gospel-church in the latter day. To wit, *That the Nation and Kingdom that will not serve her shall perish, yea, those Nations shall be utterly wasted, Isa.* 60. 12. Is it promised to Christ, *That he shall break his enemies with a rod of Iron, and dash them in peices, like a potters vessel? Psa.* 2. 9. *Rev.* 19. 15. The very same is promised to the Gospel-suffering, enduring, over-coming Saints in the latter day, *Rev.* 2. 26, 27. Is it prophesied or fore-tspoken of Christ, that out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, even a two edged sword, that with it he shall smite the Nations? *Rebel.* 1. 16. and *Revel.* 19. 15. The same is prophesied and fore-told of the Gospel-Saints in the latter day, *Psal.* 149. 6, 7, 8, 9. Is it promised to Christ, that God will answer him when he calls upon him, that he will be with him in trouble, deliver him, and honour him, And with long life will satistie him, and shew him his salvation? *Psal.* 91. 14, 15, 16. If this should be applicable only to Christ in that place, which I conceive ought not to be; yet are the same promises made to Gospel beleivers, in other places of Scripture, *Psal.* 50. 15. *Isa.* 42. 2. and 65. 24. *Mat.* 7. 7. *Job* 5. 19. *Psal.* 34. 17, 19. *Joh.* 12. 26. *Eph.* 6. 2, 3.

Object. But these promises of temporal preservation and deliverance, of honour and long life, were made upon the accompt of Legal Obedience.

Answer. True, If upon the accompt of Legal, then surely upon the accompt of Evangelical obedience. For *Godliness hath the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come, 1 Tim. 4. 8.* If therefore thou dwellest in the secret place of the most high, thou mayst beleive, thou shalt abide under the shadow of the Almighty, and be delivered from the noysome Pestilence. That is, thou mayst beleive thou shalt have glorious protections, and sweet heavenly refreshments from the Lord. Shadow signifying both protection and refreshment, as here in this place; so *Numb. 14. 9. Isa. 30. 2. Psal. 121. 5. Isa. 51. 16. and 49. 2. and 4. 6. and 25. 4. and 32. 2. Psal. 17. 8. and 36. 7.* And in particular, a preservation from the noysome Pestilence. So then, if thou makest God thy Habitation, thou mayst beleive that no evil shall befall thee, nor that any Plague shall come nigh thy dwelling; that is, no punishment or plague, no affliction, cross or calamity, shall come unto thee from the Almighty, as to hurt thee. This is the first Spiritual Receipt, and special preservative against this Pestilential Sickness.

The Sixth Spiritual Receipt.

6ly. The sixth Sovereign Antidote and Preservative against this Infectious Disease, is this, *Get a merciful, tender, pittiful and compassionate heart.* This, as it, will demonstrate us to be like unto God himself,

himself, who is the fountain of mercy. Be ye merciful, as your Father also is merciful, Luk. 6. 36. So it will denominate us to be such as are righteous before God, Psal. 37. 21. who live in the power of that Religion, that is pure and undefiled before God. And surely if thy heart is melted with the sense of Gods everlasting mercy to thy self, thou canst not but have thy heart drawn forth compassionately towards such as are in misery, necessity and distress.

But if the world hath locked up thine heart, and congealed the bowels of thy compassions towards thy poor brethren; let the blaze of thine outward profession shine never so fair, and manage the duties of external holiness never so demurely, and keep the times and tasks of daily duties with never so great austerity; nay, though thou be able to amuse weaker Christians with some affected, strain'd, and artificial fervency in Prayer (for by the meer power of hypocrisie and vain-glory, a man may pray sometimes to the Admiration of others, especially less judicious) I say, for all this, if the holy heat of Brotherly love doth not warm thine heart, and upon occasion work affectionately in thy soul, thou wilt discover thy self to be rotten at the heart-root, and that there is little of the true love and grace of God in thee, or hope of salvation.

For the dissolving therefore of thy frozen heart, and the enlarging of thy bowels of pity towards the poor Brethren of Christ Jesus; without which, never think hereafter to look him in the face with comfort, or to find mercy at the great day. Consider well that place, in 1 Job. 3. 17. *Who so hath this*

this worlds goods, and seeth his brother hath need, and shatteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? And above all other motives of mercifulness to the poor necessitous and distressed members of Christ, methinks that Argument which Paul presseth to this purpose, in 2 Cor. 8. 9. should melt the most flinty heart; For ye know (saith he) the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich. Shall the onely dear innocent Son of the All-powerful and ever-blessed Lord and King of Heaven and Earth, dis-inrich as it were, and disrobe himself of the Royalty and Majesty above, and become so poor, that whereas the Foxes have holes, and the birds of the Aeir have nests, yet he not where to lay his head; that through his poverty, and pouring out his heart-blood, he might crown us with the inestimable riches of heavenly glory, with joys and pleasures for evermore; And shall not we worms and wretches, most unworthy the least bit of bread we put into our mouths, part with something of our superfluities, to releive the fainting soul of him for whom Christ died, and which he will take as done unto himself, Mat. 25. 40. Though it be but a cup of cold water onely? Mat. 10. 42.

Besides, the last and everlasting doom at that great and dreadful day, to wit, either the glorious sentence of absolution, *Come ye blessed*; or the dreadful sentence of condemnation, *Go ye cursed*, &c. shall be pronounced upon the godly, according to the effect and fruit of their faith,

which

which works by love ; Or pats upon the Repro-
bates for omission and neglect of this most excellent
duty of mercifulness to the poor members of
Christ , *Mat. 25. 40, 41.*

Consider withal, as an inflaming Motive to draw
forth the bowels of thy compassions to poor needy
and necessitous souls , that by laying out thy self
cheerfully , seasonably , liberally , and yet but
according to thine ability , towards such , *Deut.*
15. 10. 2 Cor. 9. 7. Prov. 3. 27, 28. 2 Cor. 9. 6.
Prov. 11. 25. 2 Cor. 8. 13, 14. Act. 11. 29. Thou
shalt hereby become a Creditor , even to thy most
glorious and bountiful Creator . For *he that hath*
pitty upon the poor , lendeth unto the Lord , and that
which he hath given will he pay him again , Prov.
19. 17. Now what a Motive I say is this , to be
merciful , that we shall make God himself our
debtor , the ever-springing fountain of bliss , and
Lord of all goodness , who doth all things like
himself , omnipotently , bountifully , above all
expectation , as becomes the mighty Sovereign of
Heaven and Earth ? If he works , he makes a
World ; If he be angry he drowns the whole face
of the earth ; If he love , the heart blood of his
dearest Son is not too dear ; If he stand upon his
peoples side , he makes the Sun to stand still , and
the Stars to fight ; If he repay , he gives his own
all-sufficient self , with the overflowing torrents
of all pleasures and glory through all eternity .
But to bring it a little nearer to the thing in
hand ; Consider a few of the Promises of God ,
as a further provocation to this so pious and
profitable a work and service for the Lord .

Wouldst

Wouldst thou be in a thriving and prosperous state in this world, whether as to the outward or inward man? Surely, to be compassionate this way, is the very ready way; If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry (saith the Prophet) and satisfie the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and break forth as the morning, and thy darkness be as the noon-day; and thy health shall spring forth speedily; Mark that, The Lord shall, guide thee continually, and satisfie thy soul in drougth and make fat thy bones, and thou shalt be like a watered Garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not, Isa. 58. 10. and 8. 11. Thine horn shall be exalted with honour, and thou shalt not want, Psa. 112. 9. Prov. 28. 27. Yea, for this thing, the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto, Deut. 15. 10. It will be then a profitable inquisition amongst others; when a man finds himself to go backward in his estate, whether upon the temporal or spiritual account, and Gods secret displeasure to blow upon his wealth, or afflict his body with painful diseases, to examine well, whether he was not ordinarily wont to shut up his bowels of compassion, then to pour out his soul to the poor. For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy, Jam. 2. 13. But with the merciful, God will shew himself merciful, Psa. 18. 25. Yea, saith our Saviour, Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy, Mat. 5. 7. Which brings to my remembrance that pious and most affectionate with of Paul, in 2 Tim. 1. 16, 18. The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus, Why? for he oft refreshed me, said he,

he, and was not ashamed of my chain. The Lord grant unto him; that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day; and in how many things he ministred unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well. It seems he was a very charitable soul; He did not (as many professors of our times do, talk much and do little, have their mouths open, but the bowels of their compassions shut fast enough, his readiness to distribute, and willingness to communicate, did clearly and plainly demonstrate, his care to lay up in store for himself a good foundation against the time to come, that he might lay hold on eternal life. According to the counsel that Paul gives to the worldly rich men of his time, 1 Tim. 6. 17, 18, 19. To which concurs that of Solomon, Prov. 11. 17. *The merciful man doth good to his own soul, but he that is cruel, troubleth his own flesh.* The merciful man, the Hebrew it seems renders it, a man of mercifulness, of bounty, liberality; So a man of knowledge, that is, a knowing and understanding man; a man of truth or faithfulness, that is, a true or faithful man, Neh. 7. 2. A man of peace, that is, one that is peaceable; Men of holiness, that is, holy men, Exod. 22. 31. This man that is merciful to others that are necessitous, and in distress; or as James expresseth it, that visiteth the Fatherless and Widows in their affliction, and hides not himself from his own flesh, Isa. 58. 7. (For what is mercy but a pittying of others that are in misery? Mercy and misery being relatives, were there no want nor trespass, there needed no mercy;) This man, saith Solomon, doth good to his own soul, or as other translations have it, he rewardeth his own soul, he doth good unto himself,

self, as well as unto others, for it pleaseth God to reward the good works of his poor Servants, according to that of Solomon, Prov. 11. 25. *The liberal soul shall be made fat, and he that watereth, shall be watered also himself.* And of that of our blessed Lord, in Mat. 10. 42. who brings it down to a cup of cold water onely, that this merciful man shall give to drink to one of his little ones, which Mark expounds to such as belong to him, Mark 9. 41. *Verily, I say unto you, saith our dear Lord, he shall in no wise lose his reward;* which gives us some light into that expression of Paul to Timothy, in his advice, as before, to rich men. Of laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come; Some reads, for in store, laying up for a Treasure, a good foundation, that is, a foundation of hope; Not that the liberality of the rich does merit it, but because it is a fruit of faith; and God hath promised to reward the same grace for Christs sake; It being a sacrifice with which he is well pleased, Heb. 13. 16 Or as Paul expresseth it, in Phil. 4. 18. An odour of a sweet and fragrant smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God. For as sweet odours are a refreshing of the senses, so our refreshing of the Saints bowels; is in a manner a refreshing of Gods own sense and Spirit. A term borrowed from the perfumes which were made upon the Altar of Incense. I shall add further, but that in, Psa. 41. 1, 2, 3. which I judge very pertinent to the thing in hand; *Blessed is he that considereth the poor, the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble; The Lord will preserve him and keep him alive, and he shall be blef-*

sed

sed upon the earth. And thou wilt not deliver him into the will of his enemies. The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing, thou wilt make his bed in his sickness.

David being now falling into a heavy sickness, or some other great distemper or streight, he describeth here the happiness or blessing which they shall obtain at Gods hands, that carry themselves piously and compassionately towards the afflicted. *Blessed is he that considereth the poor, that judgeth wisely of the poor, and will not rashly condemn him as a Malefactor whom God doth visit.* The poor here is taken for a miserable one, one that is thinn, exhausted of his abilities; whither of the body, and so a sick one; or of goods and means, and so a poor one. *The Lord (saith he) shall deliver him in time of trouble.* The Lord shall preserve him and keep him alive, the Lord shall revive, quicken, heal him or make him whole, and make him happy on the earth; and will not deliver him, or give him over into the desire or will of his enemies. The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of *languishing*, or the bed of sorrow, others read it. The Lord shall under-prop him upon his sick bed, upon his bed of faintness, weakness, feebleness; yea, make his bed in his sickness, or change his bed, which may admit of this two-fold sense. As if he had said, speaking in a propheticall manner; Thou, O God, shalt as surely turn his sickness to the best, as if I saw it already performed. Or thus, thou shalt supply all humane helps unto him, that is used to be bestowed upon sick, diseased and distempered persons.

Now

Now what a comfortable promise is here for our faith to take hold of, in such a languishing and dying time. O how should it encourage and stir up the rich, especially in this world, *To be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate*, 1 Tim. 6. 17, 18. Yea, all of us that can make out our Election of God, as holy and beloved; *To be putting on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another; if any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ hath forgiven us, so also should we do*: And above all these things (saith the Apostle) *put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness*, Col. 3. 12, 13, 14. He wishes them, as they would be sure of their Election, and have a sound note or mark of their holiness, and that God loved them to be putting on bowels of mercies; as if he had said, let these be your robes and coverings, wear them as you wear your garments; let them be as tender and inward unto you, as your own principal and most vital parts. Such a measure of pity and compassion, as maketh the inward bowels to yearn; and this is proper to such as are in affliction and misery.

But Kindness extendeth further, and reacheth to all, whither in prosperity or adversity, which is a sweet and loving disposition of the heart, and a courteous affection to all, shewing it self in pleasing, and good speech, and behaviour towards all. But because Love is the root of all, he doth therefore compare Charity to the most precious garment, which is or can be put upon all others; Calling it, *The bond of perfectness*, or the most perfect bond, which is among men to unite them together.

together. *Vinculum perfectionis*, is, *Vinculum perfectissimum*, quo plures inter se colligantur. I shall conclude this point, with that faithful saying and affirmation of, *Jud. 8. and 14.* That they which have beleived in God, might be careful to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful; they should learn to be eminent in good works above others. The *Vulgar* hath it, *Curent bonis operibus præ esse*: They should go before others in good works. And gives this as his reason therefore. *These things are good and profitable unto men.* Thus much for the Sixth Sovereign Remedy.

The Seventh Spiritual Receipt.

7ly. The Seventh and last Sovereign Receipt, for the prevention or curing of this Pestilential disease; Is an Evangelical universal obedience to the Gospel of Christ: Called by the Apostle in *Rom. 16. 26.* The obedience of Faith, consisting in a readiness to do the Will of God, in things commanded or forbidden, be they never so troublesome or contrary to our reason or liking. I call it *Evangelical*, to distinguish it from that which is *Legal*; which required an absolute universal conformity, not of our actions only, but of our affections also to the will of God, exactly in every point and title thereof, upon pain of Eternal Damnation, *Gal. 3. 10, 13.* And therefore by the Apostle called, *The ministration of death and condemnation*, *2 Cor. 3. 7, 9.* This Evangelical Obedience, consists in beleiving the Gospel, and subjecting our selves thereunto; whence it is, that it is put for faith

R

or

or the receiving of the Gospel, *Rom.* 1. 8. Comp. with *Chap.* 16. 19. and to obey Christ, for beleiving in Christ, *2 Cor.* 10. 5. and to obey the truth for beleiving the Doctrine of the Gospel, *Rom.* 6. 17. *1 Pet.* 1. 22. Which evangelical or Gospel obedience is to be performed unto God, in and through our Lord Jesus Christ, who as he is held forth to be the pattern of our obedience, *1 Cor.* 11. 1. So is he the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him, *Heb.* 5. 9. And through his obedience onely it is that we are made righteous, *Rom.* 5. 19. This I say does consist in a readiness and chearfulness to do the will of God. *Lo I come* (saith Christ) *to do thy will O God*, *Heb.* 10. 7. *My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work*, *Joh.* 4. 34. And it must be performed from the heart, out of love unto Christ, *Rom.* 6. 17. Upon this hing all Gospel obedience hangs, *Rom.* 13. 10. This is the spring from whence it originally flows, *2 Cor.* 5. 14. The love of Christ constraineth us; The force and efficacy of which will make difficult things easie; The Saints loved not their lives unto the death, for the love they bore unto Christ, *Rev.* 12. 11. Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and (saith the Text) they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had unto her, *Gen.* 29. 20. Charity suffereth long and is kind, it beareth all things, beleiveth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things, *1 Cor.* 13. 4, 7. Much water cannot quench it, neither can the floods drown it, *Cant.* 8. 7. When the soul is mounted upon the wings of faith and charity, it makes it like the Chariots of *Aminadib*, *Cant.* 6. 12. It will make the soul cleave unto Christ,

as Ruth unto Naomi her Mother-in-law; not to leave him, nor return from following after him. It will say then unto Christ, *Whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people, shall be my people; and thy God, my God; where thou diest, will I dye; and there will I be buried; the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me,* Ruth 1. 16, 17. Lord if thou goest into a Prison, saith the gracious, loving beleiving, obeying soul, I will go with thee; if thou lodgest there in a Dungeon, I will lodge with thee; I am resolved in thy strength not to leave thee, go where thou wilt; It will say as Paul, *None of these things shall move me, nor shall I count my life dear unto my self, so that I may but finish my course with joy; and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God,* Act. 20. 24. Mount Sion Saints will follow the Lamb whither-soever he goeth, Rev. 14. 4. They have an inseperable communion, an individual society with the Lamb, which referred to the state of their warfare, notes the sincerity and constancy of their faith and obedience under Anti-christs persecution; they follow not the Beast, but the Lamb, wheresoever he goeth, that is, they exactly walk in the precepts and steps of the lamb, wheresoever he leadeth them, & he leadeth them to the Fountains of living waters, Chap. 7. 17. These suffers not the decres and Idols of the Beast to be obtruded upon them, but wholly cleave to Christ their guide, and like Caleb & Joshua, they will follow him fully, Numb. 14. 24. This indeed is very difficult in it self, and in our strength so to do. Our own experience tells us, that Gospel obedience is an

up-hill way, and its hard to get a great waight up an hill; therefore when the Apottle preffeth Gospel-obedience, he bids us lay aside every weight, that we may run with patience, *Heb. 12. 1.* The old Adam is a clogg to our obedience, and weights easily pull us down; and if down, to rise again, it is up-hill work.

What a do have we to get up our hearts unto true Gospel-sorrow for our sins? Oh, what a hard work it is to bring our hearts up to a beleif of the promises? to trust God in difficulties, &c. Oh, how difficult to get up the hill of Gospel-obedience? what pains must we take to get to communion with God in the Spirit? Gods call for our obedience, is like his command to Moses, *Deut. 32. 49, 50. Go up to Mount Nebo, and dye there.* So go up into thy Closet, and kill thy corruption there, let thy dearest lusts dye there, pluck out thy right eye there, and cut off thy right hand there, and we had as live dy, as do such a thing, such verily is our natural stubbornness against God.

When God bids us up and do this, or that; oh, how irksome and unpleating is it to flesh and blood. When the Gospel bids us look above all things: Father, Mother, Wife, Children, Lands, Houses, Life; and and leave, forsake and hate them all, and then thou shalt be a Disciple of Christ, upon the account of Gospel-obedience. Are we not ready to say with those Disciples of Christ, *This is a hard saying, who can bear it?* *Joh. 6. 60.* Yet I say, the soul that is carried upon the wings of faith and love, and strengthened with might by the Spirit of the Lord in the inward man, can chearfully and willingly conform to such harsh, difficult and unplea-

But

sing commands, considered as to flesh and blood.

But I shall come a little closer as to the thing in hand, to excite thee to this evangelical obedience.

Consider first, how acceptable and well-pleasing a thing it is unto the Lord. in that he prefers it above legal Sacrifices whatsoever. As *Samuel* said to *Saul*, *Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and Sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better then Sacrifice, and to hearken then the fat of rams.* For rebellion is as the sin of witch-craft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and Idolatry, 1 Sam. 15. 22, 23. *Hos.* 6. 6. So *Jer.* 7. 22, 23. *For I spake not unto your Fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the Land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings and sacrifices; But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people, and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you. But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear: but walked in the counsels and imaginations of their wil heart, and went backward, and not forward, &c.* And because they rejected the Lords Prophets, he sent among them, and would not hearken into the Lord, nor incline their ear, but hardened their neck, and did worse then their Fathers; Therefore the Prophet *Jeremy* was to say unto them, *This is a Nation that obeyeth not the voice of the Lord their God, nor receiveth correction, truth is perished, and is cut off from their mouth.*

Object. But did not the Lord command their burnt-offerings and Sacrifices after he had brought them out of the Land of Egypt? were they not things of his own appointment?

R 3

Answer.

Ans. Yea, Surely the Lord did command and injoy their sacrifices, and it was their sin to omit them; but the meaning is this, as if the Lord had said, This was not the chiefest thing that I commanded them, as ye Hypocrites do conceive and imagine, but it was their sincere obedience, which they have not yeilded unto me, and you have yeilded me less then they; I did expect that your forefathers should have obeyed my voice in all other things that I had enjoined and commanded them to do, as well as in matters of burnt-offerings and sacrifices, but seeing they disobeyed my voice, and yet would come and sacrifice unto me with impure hands, and unclean hearts, rebellious and disobedient spirits, their Sacrifices and Offerings to me were as if I had not commanded them at all, my soul did loath them and abominate them, and so they do yours, so long as you hearken not to my voice, but walk in the counsells and imaginations of your own evil hearts. The Prophet *Hosea* gives much light into this understanding of the mind of God, in *Hsea* 6. 6. and so does our blessed Saviour, referring his speech thereunto; *For I desire mercy, and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God, more then burnt-offerings*, See *Mat.* 9. 13. and 12. 7. that is, I preferred works of mercy, before Sacrifice, and the knowledge of God, as it is joyned with obedience to the will of God, before burnt-offering. The outward bare offering, considered in it self, without faith and repentance, the Lord highly reprov'd and rejected; See to this purpose, *Psa.* 50. 12, to 17. So *Isa.* 1. 11, to 15. See there how the Lord did abominate their offerings, notwithstanding he had instituted and appointed

appointed them. To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord, I am full of the burnt-offerings of Rams, &c. bring no more vain oblations, incense is an abomination unto me, the new Moons and Sabbaths, the calling of Assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even your solemn meeting, your new Moons, and your appointed feasts, my soul hateth, they are a trouble unto me, I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers I will not hear: And why? Your hands are full of blood, will ye kill and murder my servants the Prophets, and shed the blood of mine innocent ones? and come and think to appease my wrath with your hypocritical offerings? And therefore he exhorts them to repentance; Wash ye, make ye clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, cease to do evil, learn to do well, seek judgment, releive the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow; Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord; when these things are done, then come unto me, then bring your offerings unto me, then shall they be accepted by me, then we will reason together, then I will hear your prayers, and pardon your sins, and not before.

Hence it is, that Solomon saies, The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, but the prayer of the upright is his delight, Prov. 15. 8. So Prov. 21. 27. The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination how much more, when he bringeth it with a wicked mind. It is always evil, but how much more abominable is it, when he brings it with a wicked mind? or with a wicked intent, expressly intending to effect or accomplish some wicked act or enter-

prise thereby; and as it were calling upon God to be an help to advance and set forward, their villainous and mischievous delignes; As *Balaam* and *Balaack* did, *Numb. 23.* Will ye steal murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto *Baal*, and walk after other Gods whom ye know not, (saith the Lord) And come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, we are delivered to do all these abominations, *Jer. 7. 9, 10.* As if the Lord had said, are ye not ashamed to deal so hypocritically and wickedly. I do as much esteem of such services and sacrifices, as the cutting off of a Dogs neck, or the offering of Swines blood: as his expression is, in *Isa. 66. 3.* I accept not of such offerings; Take away from me the noise of thy songs, for I will not hear the melody of thy Violls; But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream, *Amos 5. 22, 23, 24.* Their vocal and instrumental musick, was at that time a part of Gods instituted outward worship, but by them corrupted together with the rest, through their hipocrisie and wickedness, and especially through their heinous Idolatry, whereunto they abused their Musick, *Amos 8. 3.* The songs of the Temple shall be howling in that day; I wish these things might be rightly considered, and applied in this day; I am afraid, there is such kind of service and worship performed now adays, which will come under the sharp rebuke and reprehension of the Lord; such as God will abominate, and especially if the same be offered with a wicked mind. To cry up the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, the Church of God, the House of God, &c. Will be but a trusting in lying

lying words, if the men of this generation do not thoroughly amend their ways and their doings. This will not privilegedge them, nor deliver them to do all those dreadful abominations, as are perpetrated and acted in these times. God will say, take from me the noyse of your Songs, or Singing-men, & I will not hear the melody of your Organs. They are to me but as the howling of a Dog; So on the other hand, for such as are in a congregational way, & have seperated from the publique national worship. Let them take heed that they rest not in the external part of Gods worship in outward ordinances, and Church-fellowships; and so grow secure, and formal and carnal, heartless and spiritless, and think they have a dispensation hereby for any close hypocrisie or iniquity. I would let such know, that if they are not in the life and spirit of ordinances, in the spirit of faith and prayer, and a holy communion of Saints, beautified with a practical, holy, humble, heavenly, fruitful Gospel conversation, that they sin against the Lord, and be sure their sin will find them out, as Moses said to the Remenites, and Gadites, Numb. 32. 23. I say it is Gospel Obedience that is so acceptable unto him. As obedient children, not fashioning your selves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation, 1 Pet. 1. 14, 15. And that it is so well pleasing a thing unto the Lord, and of such special efficacy and force, to stay or divert the Judgments of God from falling upon a Nation or people; that pathetical, or rather paternal wish of the Lord, seems to imply so much, Psa. 81. 13, to the end. *O that my people had*

had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways; What then? I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries; The haters of the Lord should have submitted themselves unto him; but their time should have endured for ever. He should have fed them also with the finest of the Wheat, and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee. What an ardent desire of the Lord was here, as to his peoples hearkening unto him, and walking in his ways, and see what the Lord would have done for them thereupon; He would have subdued their enemies, and so consequently procured their peace; As Nathan told David, that they should dwell in a place of their own, and move no more, and that the children of wickedness should not afflict them any more, as before time, 2 Sam. 7. 10. He would have turned his hand against their Adversaries; What's that? the hand of his Plagues and punishments; he would have taken off his Plagues and Punishments from them, and laid them upon his adversaries; so said Job, *Withdraw thine hand from me, and let not thy dread make me afraid*, Job 13. 21. that is, put thy Plague and visitation far from me, So Judges 2. 15. It is thus rendred. *Whither-soever they went out, the hand of the Lord was against them for evil*, as the Lord had said, and as the Lord had sworn unto them, and they were greatly distressed, and what hand was this, but his sore judgments, and among the rest, this of the destroying Pestilence, Lev. 26. 25. which he threatened should cleave unto them, until he had consumed them, Dent. 28. 21. So in 1 Sam. 5. 6, 11, It is said, the hand of the Lord

was heavy upon the men of *Ashdod*, and he destroyed them, and smote them with *Emerods*; See also, *Ruth* 1. 13. *Lam.* 2. 8, 9. and *Act.* 13. 11. The haters of the Lord should have submitted themselves, those that oppressed them, should have subjected unto them, either willingly, or constrainedly, choose them whether. But their time should have endured for ever; his peoples time, the time of their prosperity and flourishing estate should have endured for ever; The meaning is, they should have had and enjoyed a long blessed and happy life. He would have fed them also with the finest of the Wheat, with the fat of the Wheat, the Flower of it, or the best and chiefest Corn, they should have had whatever was best for the maintenance of their life, as *Numb.* 18. 12. *Deut.* 32. 14. and *Psa.* 147. 14. He maketh peace in thy borders, and fillest thee with the finest of the wheat; And what more? With honey out of the Rock should I have satisfied thee, *Deut.* 32. 13. The Bees in the Land of *Canaan* used much to harbour in the rocks. But spiritually this rock doth signifie Christ, *1 Cor.* 10. 4. and the honey, that sweetness of speech, and those savoury and gracious words, which did issue from his mouth, being sweetness to the soul, and health to the bones, *Psa.* 19. 10. *Prov.* 16. 24. *Cant.* 4. 11. Noting by this manner of speech, that they should have had all things, both pleasant and profitable for the maintenance of their life, if their wickedness and disobedience had not stopped the course of his goodness and mercy. Take that concurrent place also, in *Isa.* 48. 18, 19. O that thou hadst hearkened to my Commandements,
then

then had thy peace been as a River, and thy righteousness as the waves of the Sea; thy seed also had been as the sand, and the off-spring of thy bowels like the gravel thereof, his name should not have been cut off, nor destroyed from before me. What a promise was here also upon the account of their obedience? their peace or prosperity rather should have been as a River, that is abounding and always lasting, as a River floweth continually and stoppeth not; And their righteousness as the waves of the Sea; that is, the blessed and happy estate of their Government; as the fruit of their righteousness; should as the Waves of the Sea, been exceeding abundant, flowing and flourishing; and their seed should have been as the Sand of the Sea for multitude; So *Isa. 1. 12.* If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the Land; But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword; If ye obey my commandments, ye shall eat the best things of the Land, *Job 21. 25.* So *Elihu* in his speech to *Job*, If they obey and serve him, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures; But if they obey not, they shall perish by the sword, and they shall dye without knowledge, *Job 36. 11, 12.* See also, *Lev. 26. 13. Deut. 6. 3. and 11. 22. and 26. 27. and 28. 15.* What promises the Lord made upon the account of their obedience. More particularly to the thing in hand, that in *Deut. 7. 12, 13, 14, 15.* Is worthy of our best observation, where among many other things which the Lord promised as great and singular blessings upon that score, this is not the least nor meanest; *The Lord will take away from thee all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases*

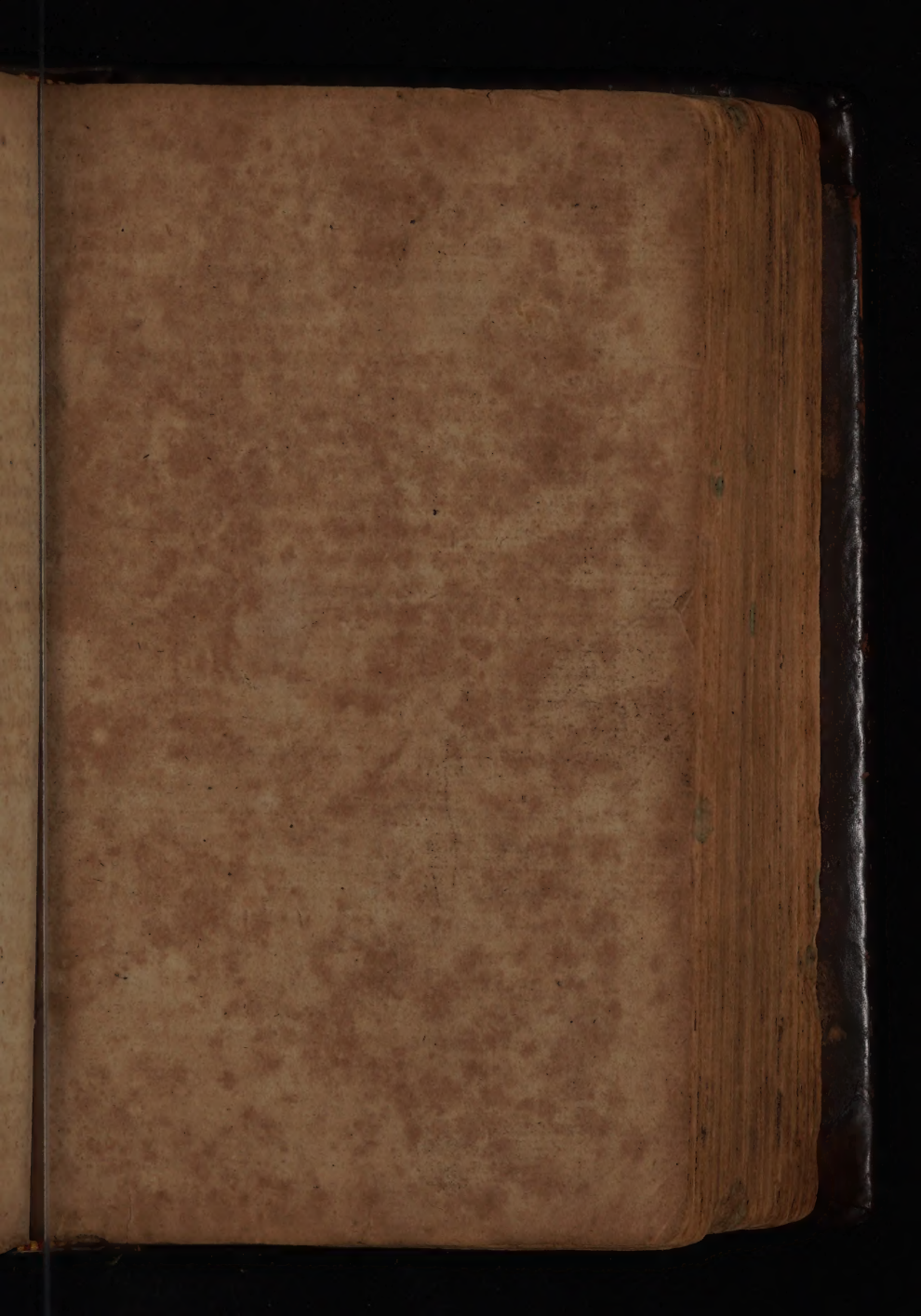
eases of Egypt upon thee, but will lay them upon all them that hate thee. What the evil diseases of Egypt were, is well known to most; This of the noysom destroying Pestilence being one, Amos 4 10. Let me add two or three places more in the New Testament, and then I shall draw to a Conclusion; John 8. 12. I am the light of the World, saith Christ, he that followeth me, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life; He that embraceth my Doctrine with a true faith, and obeyeth the same, shall not walk in the darkness of error and sin, but shall have the light of life to bring him to everlasting life; So John 12. 26. If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be; if any man serve me, him will my Father honour; Can that man be in a miserable or uncomfortable condition to be where Christ shall be? and what honour can be comparable to that which God the Father shall confer upon those who serve the Lord Christ? I shall only add, Rev. 22. 14. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the gates into the City, to wit, of the new and Heavenly Jerusalem, which descendeth out of Heaven from God, and commeth down from God out of Heaven, prepared as a Bride adorned for her Husband, Rev. 21. 2. Whereof see the description, vers. 10. And what this Tree of life is, See Rev. 22. 2. By this Tree of life is meant the Lord Jesus Christ; Fitly called the Tree of life, in respect of his vivifying, conferring, and preserving life unto them that eat thereof, which is but one; though he is said to stand in the midst of the street, and of either side of the River, that

that is, his leaves and roots, is on both sides of the River, so that there is no want on either side. Hence Christ said, *to him that overcometh, I will give to eat of the Tree of Life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.* This I say is Christ himself, the Fountain and Author of our life; The Bread of Life, *Joh. 6. 51.* The Water of Life, *Joh. 4. 7.* The Resurrection and Life it self, *Joh. 11. 25.* And he stands by the River, because he never withereth, or is fruitless. A Tree planted by the Rivers of waters, is always green and fruitful; Christ alone is sufficient for life unto all, and to quicken all his elect for ever and ever. This Tree hath twelve manner of fruits, and yeildeth her fruit every moneth, and the leaves of the Tree are for the healing of the Nations; What does this hold forth, but the quickening vertue of Christs merits and spirit, which is vigorous and efficacious throughout the whole year; that is, forever and ever, to preserve always this spiritual life, and this blessed refreshing, for the *Israel* of God, without any weakening or enfeebling, *Joh. 15. 16.* And mark in the close of this discourse, that the leaves of this Tree have a medicinal use for to preserve the health of the Nations; Not that there shall be any infirmities any more in the New *Jerusalem*, but that the healing of all infirmities which was wrought here by the merits and spirit of Christ, shall be thereby the same power for ever kept and preserved inviolate for all beleivers. See *Ezek. 47. 12.*

Now blessed are they that do his commandments, as touching, the not worshipping of the Beast and his Image, the forsaking of *Babylon*, and the

the faithful following of the Lamb, subjecting and submitting to all his holy, heavenly, pure, evangelical institutions, appointments, and commands, patiently and chearfully suffering for his sake, in bearing witness unto the truth, if called thereunto, persevering in the grace of Christ; doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God, such shall have right to this Tree of Life, and enter in through the gates into the City. They shall have a right of enjoying Christ and his unspeakable benefits, and be perpetual and most happy Inhabitants of the heavenly Jerusalem; And he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. *They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the Sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes*, Rev. 7. 15, 16, 17. I shall add no more, but that of Paul to Timothy, *Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things*, 2 Tim. 2. 7.

F I N I S.



Postscript.

MY READER, when I first saw this Book, I will tell the Reader, they can have them for nothing or little more than nothing: Therefore to prevent this plea; and that in my haste for his time and pain, I have by reason of Damage by the late fire, they can no longer be given, or sold to him. In return of the gift of Paper and Printing, if we think them not worth a single sheet, I shall not think them worth my labour. Only for as this sheet was of Absentment, if they first bring in what is laid out, except the life of Camilla, until the next printing, be contented: Otherwise I shall not be contented, and I shall not be contented.

For a partial and
compassionate Monitor

W. V.

